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The Ultimate
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JULY/AUG 2024 VOLUME 10, ISSUE 4

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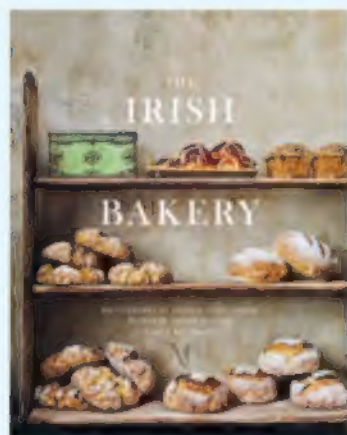


***Fast-Fix Baking:* 85 Recipes Ready to Enjoy in about 2 Hours or Less**

BY BRIAN HART HOFFMAN

Inspired by the reader-favorite Fast-Fix Baking column in *Bake from Scratch*, Brian is sharing delicious recipes that are straightforward, satisfying, and ready in two hours or less, from measuring and mixing to baking. Let breads such as Honey-Butter Yeast Rolls, bars including Black Cocoa Cheesecake Brownies, and so much more be your go-to for quickly conquering cravings, welcoming unexpected guests, and indulging with family, even when time is scarce.

➔ hoffmanmediastore.com



The Irish Bakery

BY CHERIE DENHAM

Cherie Denham's debut cookbook is a love letter to Irish culture and baking. Take a visual trip to Ireland as you flip through the pages of this book. With more than 90 recipes, this beautifully written collection pays homage to tradition while exploring new ideas. From lofty Irish Farmhouse Loaves to Pistachio and Hazelnut Frangipane Rhubarb Tart, this cookbook has a recipe fit for any baker who feels the lure of the Emerald Isle.

➔ cheriedenhamcooks.com/the-irish-bakery

bake

FROM SCRATCH®

july | august 2024 Volume 10, Issue 4

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The recipes in each issue pass through the *Bake from Scratch* test kitchen. Each is flavorful and distinctive and developed with your kitchen success in mind.

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[bake] HAPPENINGS

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with
BRIAN HART HOFFMAN

Let's Bake is a new weekly series on the *Bake from Scratch* YouTube channel

Join editor-in-chief Brian Hart Hoffman in the kitchen as he brings his favorite recipes to life. You'll learn new techniques, tips, and tricks and have fun along the way!

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baking school

You don't have to leave the comfort of your home to become a better baker. **Join *Bake from Scratch* and Williams Sonoma live on Monday nights for our online Baking School classes.** Each class is devoted to one or two recipes so you can see the entire process from start to finish while being able to chat virtually with Brian Hart Hoffman, guest instructors, and other attendees. You can also join our private Facebook group to share your bakes with other baking enthusiasts.

➔ Purchase tickets at
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baking retreats

Don't miss our fall and winter baking retreats!

Join us October 4–7 in the *Bake from Scratch* test kitchen in Birmingham, Alabama, with pie queen Erin Jeanne McDowell as she shares pie baking techniques for the perfect fall treat. For a Southern-Style Holiday Baking retreat, join us in our test kitchen November 8–11 and bake Southern classics like red velvet cake and yeasted angel biscuits. Journey to a winter wonderland in the Swiss Alps for our holiday baking retreat December 6–11 and 12–17. Take in the sights of Zurich along with a lesson in chocolate at the Lindt Home of Chocolate and bread baking with Heddi Nieuwsma and then head to the Alpine village of Arosa to make Swiss cookies with Andie Pilot and indulge in the warming winter tradition of fondue.

➔ Register for current retreats, join the wait list for sold-out retreats, and sign up to be notified of future retreats at bakefromscratch.com/baking-retreats.



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Savoring the Sweet Summer

Summer for me is about moving slower and cherishing the long days that bring late-night sunsets and a humid breeze that calms my soul. It makes me think about peaches, too, my official taste and scent of summer. And not just any peaches—Alabama peaches from Chilton County, a true taste of my home state, and something my mom and I both shared a love for. Last summer, on a drive from south Alabama to Birmingham, my husband, Stephen, and I made a stop at the famous Durbin Farms, in the heart of peach-growing paradise, for peach ice cream and a basket of the region's bounty. My days after were filled with devouring peaches while standing over the kitchen sink with juices dripping off my chin, using them in salads with burrata and toasted pecans, and then all the baking I could think of. My forever memory of last summer will be sharing fresh peach slices with my mom—the last time that ever happened, as she left us soon after. Food represents memories, and one bite can take you to a specific moment in time. I am eternally grateful for that.

You know we love French baking here at *Bake from Scratch*, so how could we not get in the spirit of the Olympics taking place in Paris this summer? When you plan your viewing parties, be sure to show off your “gold medal” baking skills with recipes created to transport you to France—the Olympic Ring Meringue Nests are at the top of my baking list for the opening ceremonies.

A little closer to home, well, a lot closer in fact—one block from the *Bake from Scratch* headquarters—we get to enjoy the baking destination that is Last Call Baking Co. . . . if we get in line early enough. Chanah Willis is winning medals of their own for how quickly a bakery can sell out the case each day. We were invited to spend the early-morning hours with the team as they baked and prepared the day's pastries, cookies, and other treats. That was one way to guarantee we were first in line to get our hands on the amazing creations coming from Birmingham's hottest bakery! Chanah and I share a love for “bake it your own,” so



turn to page 29 to learn how they also embrace breaking a few rules in dreaming up and creating blissful bites that wow their line of customers every day.

Hot days also call for cool treats, so don't miss out on the eternally customizable semifreddo recipes on page 43. Then, keep reading to find my “inspired by Julie Beth Tanous” Bake It Like Brian version that leans toward strawberry pretzel salad (it's not a salad at all, go figure!)—a true Southern favorite.

As you turn the pages of this issue, our recipes with the fruits, herbs, and vegetables of the season will have you running to your farmers' market or your own herb garden to get the deliciousness started.

Happy baking,

Brian Hart Hoffman
Editor-in-Chief

P.S. Even more delicious baking is headed your way through our newly relaunched YouTube channel, where you'll find me baking my way through favorite recipes and sharing baking tips and fundamentals. Subscribe to the channel at youtube.com/bakefromscratch so you never miss a video.

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY
KYLE CARPENTER
RECIPE DEVELOPMENT BY
AMANDA STABLE
FOOD STYLING BY
KATIE MOON DICKERSON
STYLING BY
MAGGIE HILL



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RECIPE CORRECTIONS

While we aim for perfection with each of our recipes, we do make the occasional mistake. Here are corrections from recent issues.

MARCH/APRIL 2024

Easter Cake, page 27

For Blueberry Filling, blueberries in ingredients should be 2¼ cups (333 grams). In step 1, 1¼ cups blueberries should be 259 grams. In step 2, remaining ½ cup blueberries should be 74 grams.

Coconut Magic Bars, page 66

In ingredients, increase butter to ¾ cup plus 2 tablespoons (198 grams) and add ¼ cup (73 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar to graham cracker crumb mixture for the crust. Refrigerate until firm, about 1 hour, before cutting.

Persian Love Pound Cake, page 88

Flour in ingredients should be 2¼ cups (281 grams), not 2½ cups.

MAY/JUNE 2024

Blueberry Muffins, page 108

Blueberries in ingredients should be 2½ cups (350 grams).

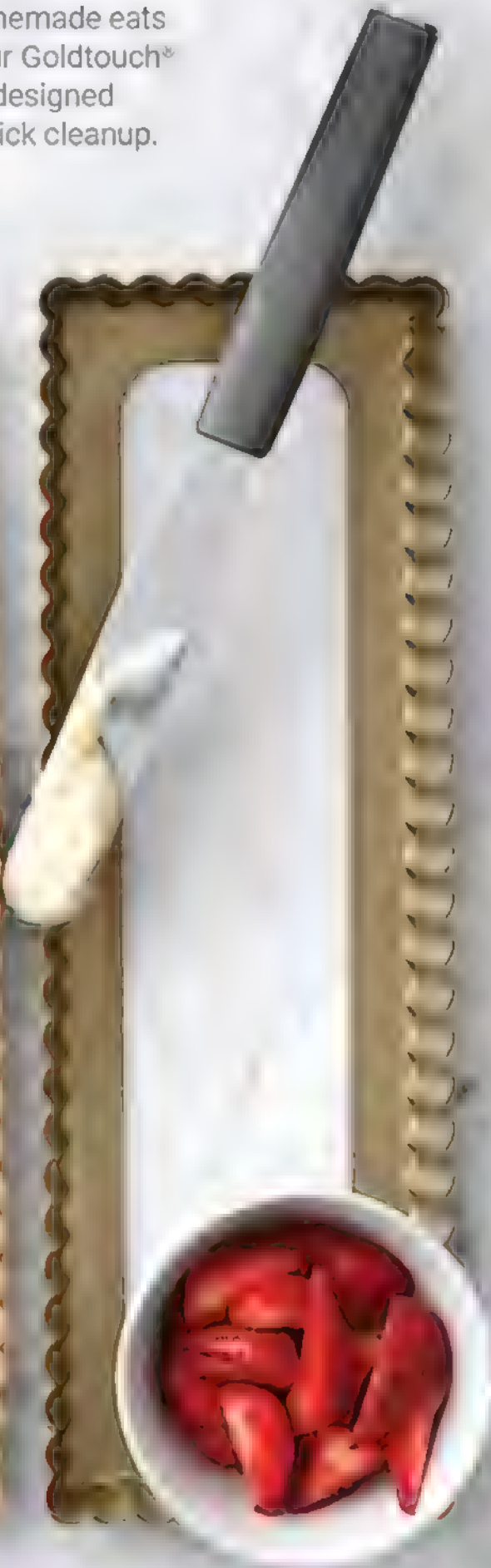
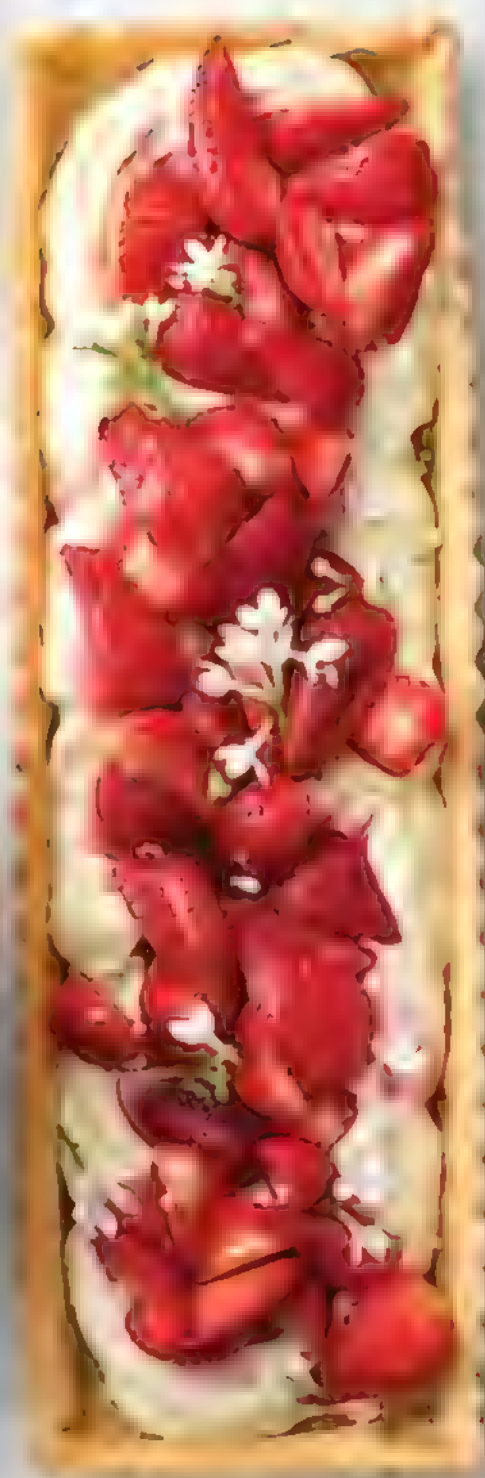
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Page 23—Photos courtesy of Lynn Weisz.

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Sara Husein: A Path Fueled By Flour, Sugar, and Dreams

By Anne-Marie Pritchett | Photography by Sydney Cisco

HMU by Melissa Evans | Location: L'Academie Baking and Cooking School

The Greatest Baker 2023, hosted by Colossal, brought together thousands of bakers worldwide to compete for the title, \$10,000, and the chance to meet the legendary 'Cake Boss' Buddy Valastro, all while raising awareness for the Andrew McDonough B+ Foundation. While thousands competed, gained industry-pro insight, and some well-deserved exposure, only one can call herself the 2023 Greatest Baker. Introducing Sara Husein, a 19-year-old

Culinary Institute of America (CIA) New York student from Mooresville (near Charlotte), North Carolina. Sara's love for baking ignited early in her life, nurtured by the sweet creations of her grandma and mom, Angela, a skilled pastry chef who owns the renowned Queen City Pastry. "My mom and grandma instilled in me a deep appreciation for baking," Sara said, "and Buddy Valastro was a huge inspiration, as well." Growing up and

into high school, Sara was also mentored by the talented bakers at Queen City Pastry, where she learned to ice and stack cakes, make fillings, and assemble everything.

Baking has always been a huge part of her life. Sara's childhood memories are filled with Halloween-themed parties and elaborate birthday cakes with festive decorations like spell books, haunted castles, and cemeteries crafted from the imagination of her talented mother.

Now at CIA, Sara is sharpening her skills and broadening her horizons, guided by a dual passion for baking and business. With dreams of one day owning her own bakery, she represents a new breed of bakers, armed not only with spatulas and mixing bowls but also with a keen understanding of entrepreneurship and innovation. "I love trying new things," Sara said, highlighting her penchant for experimentation and creativity.

As she prepares for an exciting summer externship at the Four Seasons in Philadelphia, Sara's aspirations extend far beyond the confines of traditional baking. "I want to focus on individual plated desserts, pastries, mini tarts, eclairs, profiteroles, and bread making," she said. "Right now, I'd say my Roasted Pineapple Tart is my Holy Grail."

Sara's path is full of opportunity. She is excited about the future, with plans to travel and learn all she can before settling down. She said she couldn't have been crowned the Greatest Baker without her community of supporters. "I am incredibly grateful to my parents, siblings, friends at culinary school, my family at Queen City Pastry, and the countless supporters worldwide who voted for me. It's truly overwhelming to receive such widespread support, with contributions coming in from places like Jordan, Egypt, and beyond. Thank you to everyone who believed in me and rallied behind me on this journey."



Quickfire Round

Describe your baking style in five words: Everything's there for a reason

Baking tip: Mise en place

Favorite game: Poker

Signature dish: Roasted Pineapple Tart

Favorite holiday: Christmas

Worst food to eat: Fish

Favorite ingredient to cook with: Anything tropical

Worst ingredient to cook with: Gum paste

Nickname: Marie (middle name)

Celebrity you want to meet the most: Buddy Valastro (it's happening!)

Dark or white chocolate: White chocolate

If you could make a new holiday, what would it be: Pie in the face day

Happy place: In the kitchen

@sara_m_husein | www.queencitypastry.com

Colossal, a nationally registered professional fundraiser, has raised over \$3.9 million through the Greatest Baker Competition in support of the Andrew McDonough Be Positive (B+) Foundation. This organization is dedicated to providing financial and emotional support to families of children with cancer nationwide and funds research to find cures for childhood cancers and advancements in treatment protocols. Donations were raised by Colossal on behalf of DTCare, a United States 501(c)(3) public charity organization that issued a final donation grant, minus competition fees and costs, to the B+ Foundation. bepositive.org



Home-Based Bakery Owners Take the Cake

MEET THE 2023 GREATEST BAKER FINALISTS



Alisha Davis

Alisha, a creative home baker from Brookfield, Ohio, took second place in the 2023 Greatest Baker competition. She finds joy in her cottage bakery business, Sweet Tooth To Go, and her family-inspired



baking endeavors. Fond childhood memories of holiday cooking sessions with her grandmother, aunt, and mother set the foundation for her passion for baking.

Initially specializing in cake design, Alisha recently discovered a love for gourmet cookies. She relishes the freedom to experiment with flavors alongside her daughter, Audrey, her biggest fan and honest taste tester at age 8. Alisha's baking style can be summed up as "classic meets modern, artistic, and flavorful." Self-taught and professionally driven, Alisha dreams of expanding her home bakery, aiming to secure a permanent residence with additional

kitchen space. Alisha also enjoys cooking savory dishes, especially during grilling season and BBQ gatherings.

Signature dish: Lemon Blueberry Cake

Favorite ingredient to cook with: Anything fresh & local. I love supporting other small businesses/farms.

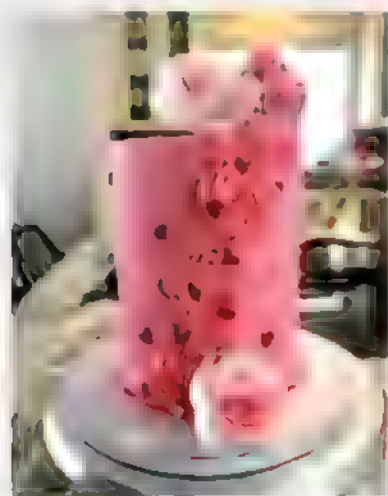
Worst ingredient to cook with: Matcha

If you could make a new holiday, what would it be: Family Day

What is your happy place: Warm beach like the Bahamas

Baking tip: To get really black buttercream, start by adding black cocoa powder and then the food dye. This allows you to get a true black frosting without using too much coloring.

Facebook: @sweettoothtogo



Eniola Ayobamidele-Ajayi

Eniola is a 19-year-old culinary arts student at the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology in Canada. But don't let her

age fool you. With five years of baking experience and ongoing culinary education, Eniola owns Ennie's Bakery, where she infuses her creations with creativity and quality ingredients. Her journey into baking began unexpectedly during a summer break in Nigeria, where she discovered the joy of creating edible art under the guidance of a friend's mother. Inspired by shows like 'Cake Boss' and driven by deep interest, Eniola embarked on a path to pursue baking as more than just a hobby. She describes her baking style as "elegantly refined with a twist."

Outside of the kitchen, Eniola finds solace in playing the violin, balancing her creative pursuits with musical

expression. Her dedication to learning, innovation, and quality craftsmanship defines her journey as a culinary artist.

Signature dish: Nigerian jollof rice

Favorite ingredient to cook with: Maggi

Worst ingredient to cook with: Fish sauce

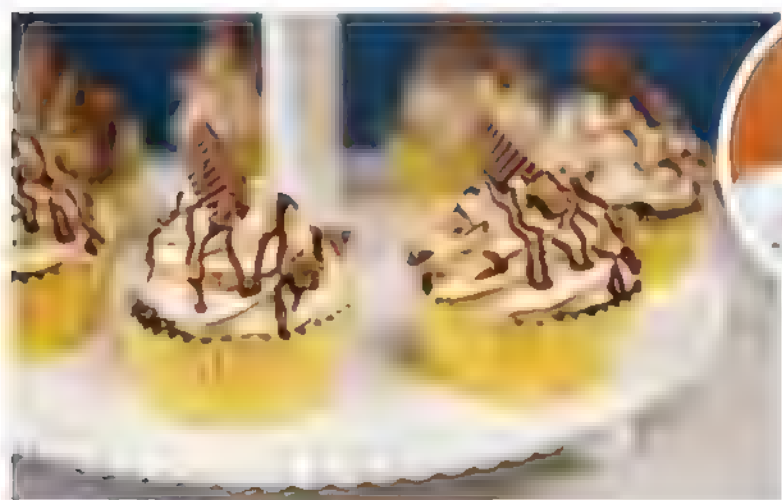
Celebrity you most want to meet: BTS

What is your happy place: When talking to God

Baking tip: While modifying recipes to innovate and create new culinary experiences is common, retaining the original recipe as a reference point is essential. If you encounter inconsistencies, return to the foundation of your original recipe.

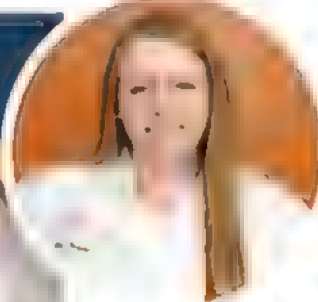
Tiktok: @enn.ie_

Instagram: @enn.ie_



Bailee Sivley

Bailee, a devoted baker from Greensboro, NC, started stirring up cake batter during the 2020 pandemic, seeking a new skill to master during her free time. Starting with custom cakes,



Bailee's dedication to honing her craft led her to establish Baking By Bailee, a delivery-based home business. As a wife, mother of three, and active member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Bailee's baking career intertwines with her family life and community involvement. She cherishes spending time with her family, often visiting parks and indulging in treats from their local ice cream shop, Ozzie's Ice Cream.

Self-taught and driven by originality, Bailee describes her baking style as "creative, flavorful, and visually captivating." She also enjoys cooking

savory meals for her family and friends, but her heart lies in crafting custom delights that bring joy to her customers. Bailee hopes to one day invest in a commercial kitchen, acquiring essential equipment for quality and expansion.

Signature dish: Reese's Peanut Butter Cake

Favorite ingredient to cook with: Cream cheese

Worst ingredient to cook with: Butter

If you could make a new holiday, what would it be: Foster Child Appreciation Day

What is your happy place: The beach

Baking tip: Add hot water to your chocolate cake batter to bloom the cocoa powder, resulting in a rich chocolatey flavor.

FB, TikTok, Instagram: Baking By Bailee

bakingbybailee.com



Leilanie Todd

2023 GREATEST BAKER CRITIC'S PICK



During the quarter-final round of the 2023 Greatest Baker competition, renowned influencer Melissa Anaya joined the competition as a guest judge, recognizing one baker with the most delectable work to be crowned the "Critic's Pick." From hundreds of entries, Melissa awarded Leilanie Todd's remarkable ramen cake as the champion.

Growing up in a household where baking was not just a skill but a way of life, Leilanie inherited her love for the craft from her mother, who was the neighborhood's go-to baker for pies and intricate cakes. From a young age, Leilanie knew that she wanted to pursue a career in the culinary arts. She



eventually attended the California Culinary Academy (CCA) in San Francisco. After honing her skills in various prestigious establishments in the Bay Area, like Domaine Chandon and Ozumo, Leilanie started her own business—Brown Butter Bakery—which specializes in wedding cakes, custom cakes, and small desserts.

What sets Leilanie apart is her ability to infuse her creations with a unique island flair, drawing inspiration from her Guamanian heritage. "A lot of my cooking influences are island flavors from Guam, like these banana doughnuts that I make, pistachio cake, Latiya (which is baked custard on a chiffon cake), and customer favorites like lilikoi bars and guava strawberry cake; and for savory, we do a lot of barbecue and red rice," she explained. For the Greatest Baker photoshoot, Leilanie prepared a beautiful three-tiered studded buttercream cake adorned with vibrant flowers, speaking volumes of her artistic vision and attention to detail. Inside is a carrot pineapple cake with cream cheese buttercream inside.

One of Leilanie's most notable achievements is her Ramen Cake, which won her the title of Critic's Pick during the 2023 Greatest Baker competition. Crafted with meticulous precision and a dash of whimsy, this culinary marvel perfectly encapsulates Leilanie's playful yet sophisticated approach to baking.

Despite her success, Leilanie remains grounded and grateful for the support of her family, including her three children, who inspire her every day. As she looks towards the future, Leilanie dreams of expanding and plans to open a bakery cafe in Hawaii—a nod to her love for the island's flavors and culture.

brwnbutterbakery.com |
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A BUNDT-BAKING EXTRAVAGANZA

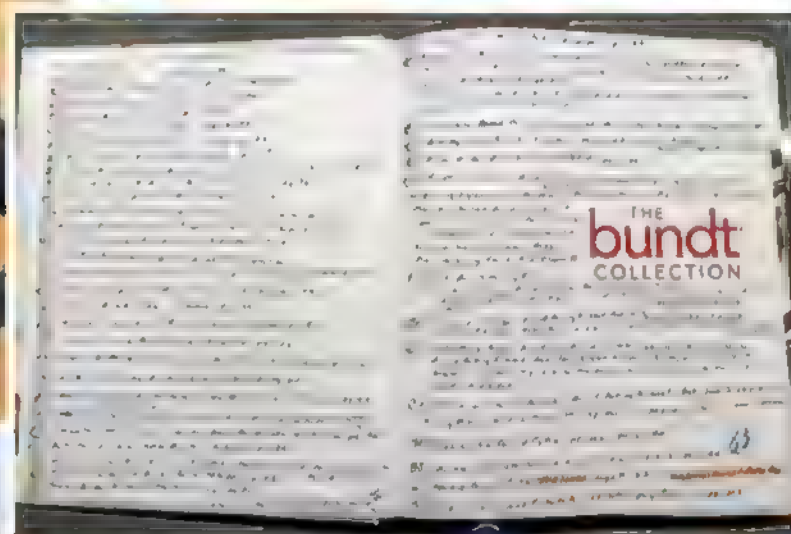
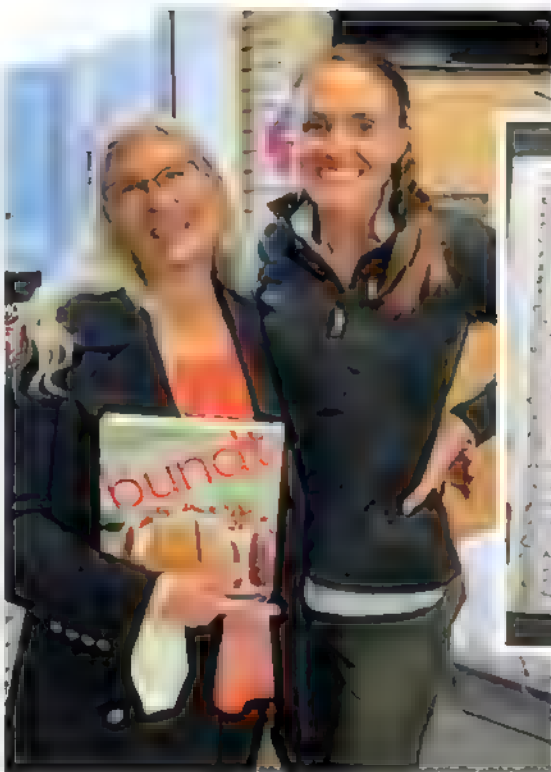
Dedicated Bundt baker Kim Gasset-Schiller shares her experience baking through The Bundt Collection cookbook

What made you decide to bake your way through *The Bundt Collection*?

Kim Gasset-Schiller: I love to bake, but I tend to make the same recipes over and over, staying in my comfort zone. In October 2020, I began participating in the Monday night Baking School classes taught by Brian Hart Hoffman. November 2 of that year was the Bake a Bundt Cake class; it was this lesson that got me to thinking about baking my way through Brian's cookbook, *The Bundt Collection*, which I had purchased just the month before the class. Committing to baking all the recipes in *The Bundt Collection* would force me out of my comfort zone and open my baking world to new ingredients, techniques, and challenges. Since it was late in the year and the holidays were on the horizon, I decided to begin January 2021, baking one Bundt a week.

Have any recipes become favorites in your house?

KGS: The one recipe that stands out for us is the Carrot Chai Bundt Cake. This one is our favorite! I use the leftover Chai Sugar to put inside my coffee. But every crumb of every Bundt was enjoyed, not one went to waste! As a nod to Brian's love of baking and travel, the last Bundt I baked was the In-Flight Bundt Cake, which is flavored



Kim Gasset-Schiller (left) and Jennifer Dalquist, Nordic Ware executive vice president and granddaughter of company founders, Dave and Dotty Dalquist

with coffee and the Biscoff cookies that are served on airplanes.

How have you documented baking each cake?

KGS: On the pages in the book before the table of contents, I've listed the order in which I baked the Bundts. Each entry includes the name of the recipe, the date I made it, and the page number of the recipe. Some of the cakes listed aren't from just from the book; I've also made Bundts from Baking School classes and the Bundt of the Month series. On the individual recipes, I noted the date I made the recipe and the order in which that cake was made. I noted if the recipe could be altered, like the Kugelhupf cake that could be made with raisins or chocolate chips, so two recipes. Then I made notes based on how the recipe turned out, if my cooking time varied from the recipe,

if my glaze/frosting was a consistency that worked for the recipe, notes about how I make it my own next time. I also noted when I attended my first *Bake from Scratch* baking retreat, which was the Bundt Baking retreat in Minneapolis, Minnesota, when we visited the Nordic Ware factory. Making notes in my baking books reminds me of handwritten recipes on notecards from my mother and grandmother.

Have you changed any of the recipes to make them your own?

KGS: For the most part, I have not changed any of the recipes. Traditionally, when I'm baking a recipe that is new to me, I follow the recipe as it is written. While making a new recipe, I make notes for the next time I (or someone else) may make the recipe, so I'll make it my own.

What's the biggest lesson you've learned about baking Bundts during this project?

KGS: One of the most exciting and stressful moments in baking a Bundt cake comes after the 5- to 10-minute cooldown post-bake, when/if the cake slides out of the pan in one piece. I've had only about three of my Bundts stick to the pan. The very first Bundt I made stuck to the pan, though, of course, we ate the whole cake anyway. After that experience only using baking spray to prepare the pan, I switched to basting melted butter and sifting flour into my Bundt pans and have had only two partially stick to the pan. I find the old-school technique of preparing the pan this way works best for me.

Is this the first cookbook you've baked in its entirety?

KGS: Yes! And it has been so much fun! I suspect it won't be my last. I skipped around when deciding on which Bundts I baked, meaning I tried to make the recipes based on seasons, holidays, and events. So, I didn't bake from the beginning of the book to the end. It was fun planning the next Bundt to make.

Do you have plans to bake through the sequel, *Another Bundt Collection*?

KGS: I don't have firm plans to bake through it, though I've already made a couple of recipes from it! I made the Jalapeño-Cheddar Monkey Bread for a party I attended earlier this year. Also, I have partnered with a local nonprofit that supports the unhoused in our community; I make a Bundt cake when a birthday is celebrated. I made the Brownie Bundt Cake for one of the celebrations. I like that *Another Bundt Collection* includes Bundtlette recipes and more savory recipes, as well as the Charlotte pan. 🍪

🔗 Find *The Bundt Collection* books, Bundt pans, and Bundt tools at bakefromscratch.com/shop.

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from the test kitchen

PARBAKING AND BLIND BAKING



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Although these terms are often used interchangeably, there is a distinct difference between them.

As the word indicates, **parbaking** a piecrust means to bake it partially. Parbaking is standard practice for many pies with juicy or liquid fillings such as fresh fruit, pumpkin, and quiche.

Blind baking takes parbaking a step further, fully baking the empty piecrust until it's golden brown and set throughout. Blind-baked crusts are used with no-bake fillings like a cooked custard or pudding.



Why would you want to **parbake** or **blind-bake** your piecrust? Doing so gives the piecrust a head start on baking so it stays crisp and firm rather than soft and soggy, and it prevents your filling from overbaking. **Here's how to do it.**



Line your piecrust with a piece of parchment paper large enough so that you can securely pick up the parchment by its edges. (You can also use heavy-duty foil instead of parchment.) Fill the parchment two-thirds to three-fourths full with pie weights and spread them in an even layer.



Bake the crust according to your recipe or until the edges of the crust look dry and are beginning to turn very lightly brown. If you don't have pie weights, dried beans or rice and even metal coins will work, and you can use the beans or rice over and over to bake with—just be sure to label them for baking rather than eating.



Carefully remove the parchment and weights, return the crust to the oven, and bake just a minute or two more until the bottom of the crust looks dry. At this stage, your crust is parbaked.



For a blind-baked crust, continue baking the crust until it's golden brown and crisp all over. You may need to cover the edges of the crust with foil to prevent it from overbrowning while the sides and bottom of the crust set. Let your blind-baked crust cool completely before filling it. 

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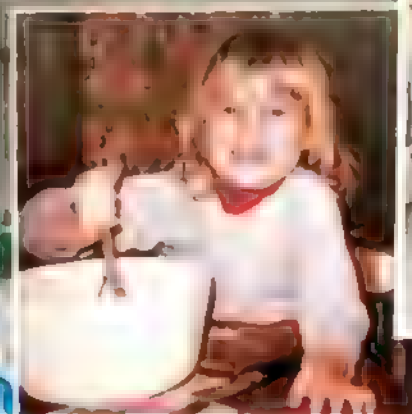
A TASTY TRADITION

*Reader Lynn Weisz shares her family's
generations-old school-day treat*

PHOTOGRAPHY BY KYLE CARPENTER
FOOD STYLING BY KATIE MOON DICKERSON
STYLING BY MAGGIE HILL



Lynn as a child making cookies; Lynn's father with her children, Jake and Sarah



These beloved chocolate cookies have been in *Bake from Scratch* reader Lynn Weisz's family for three generations and counting. While no one knows where the name of these cookies came from, they have inspired the start of a beloved tradition. Lynn's great-aunt Liz Murray was the source of these Go-to-School Cookies.

Lynn tells us that Liz had a go-to cookbook in the margins of which she scribbled her favorite family recipes, including these cookies. Aunt Liz had a degree in home economics and worked as the head dietician of a hospital for 35 years. She was a strong woman for her family, taking over raising six kids, one of whom was Lynn's father, after her sister's passing.

Liz would bake these cookies for her nieces and nephews every year at the start of a new school season. Lynn's mother inherited the recipe when she married into the family and did the same for Lynn and her brothers. Now, Lynn bakes the cookies for her two children to bring to school and share with their friends. Over the years, Lynn has put her own twist on the recipe by adding chocolate chips and coffee to the batter and almond extract to the frosting, and during the holidays, she adds peppermint extract and crushed candy canes for a festive twist. Now, Lynn's blog, *Family Tree Foodie*, records her journey to preserve and elevate cherished family recipes while celebrating the strong, inspirational women who made them.

GO-TO-SCHOOL COOKIES

Makes 22 cookies or 11 cookie sandwiches

Recipe adapted from Lynn Weiss

Cookies and milk are the quintessential after-school treat for kids of all ages. These chewy deep-chocolate cookies with crunchy edges and topped or sandwiched with a creamy vanilla-almond frosting come together incredibly easily.

Cookies:

- ½ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- ½ cup (100 grams) granulated sugar
- ⅓ cup (73 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar
- 1 large egg (50 grams), room temperature
- 2 tablespoons (30 grams) brewed coffee or whole milk, room temperature
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract
- 1 cup plus 2 tablespoons (141 grams) all-purpose flour
- ⅓ cup (25 grams) Dutch process cocoa powder
- ½ teaspoon (2.5 grams) baking powder
- ½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt
- ¼ teaspoon (1.25 grams) baking soda
- 1 cup (170 grams) mini semisweet chocolate chips

Frosting:

- ¼ cup (57 grams) unsalted butter, room temperature
- 3 cups (360 grams) confectioners' sugar
- 3 tablespoons (45 grams) whole milk
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract
- ½ teaspoon (2 grams) almond extract

Garnish: rainbow sprinkles

1. Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C). Line baking sheets with parchment paper.
2. For cookies: In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter, granulated sugar, and brown sugar at medium-high speed until fluffy, 2 to 3 minutes, stopping to scrape bottom and sides of bowl and paddle. Add egg, coffee or milk, and vanilla, and beat until combined.
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, cocoa, baking powder, salt, and baking soda. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating just until combined, stopping to scrape bottom and sides of bowl and paddle. Stir in chocolate chips.
4. Using a 1½-tablespoon spring-loaded scoop, scoop dough (about 32 grams each), and place 2 inches apart on prepared pans.
5. Bake until edges are set and tops look dry, 8 to 10 minutes. Let cool on pans for 3 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks.
6. For frosting: Clean bowl of stand mixer and paddle attachment. Using the paddle attachment, beat butter at medium speed until creamy, 1 to 2 minutes. Reduce mixer speed to low, and gradually add confectioners' sugar, beating until combined and stopping to scrape bottom and sides of bowl and paddle. Add milk and extracts, beating until combined. Gradually increase mixer speed to medium-high, and beat until light and fluffy, about 2 minutes.
7. Spread 2 to 3 teaspoons (12 to 18 grams) frosting onto cooled cookies; garnish with sprinkles, if desired. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days. 🍪

Have an heirloom family recipe you'd like to share?

➡ Send us details at bakefromscratch@hoffmanmedia.com.

from the pantry

SUMMER herbs

*Harvest the
season's flavors*



BY CHRISTINA FLEISCH
PHOTOGRAPHY BY KYLE CARPENTER
FOOD STYLING BY KATIE MOON DICKERSON
STYLING BY MAGGIE HILL

There's nothing quite like the feeling of late summer, when the trees are lush and the sun warmed air drapes over you like a blanket. You come back from the garden with a tattered sun hat resting on your head and a basket hanging from the crook of your arm, filled with the day's freshest picks: bright red tomatoes, large zucchinis, the last of the season's blueberries, and on top of it all, bunches of freshly picked herbs—handfuls of mint to muddle into a glass of ice-cold sweet tea, basil leaves to layer into tomato sandwiches, and sprigs full of thyme to stir into cake batters and bread doughs.

There are so many different varieties of herbs to choose from, so how do you know which to use? Basil has more than 15 varieties, but the three most common are Genovese, sweet basil, and purple Thai or lemon basil. Sweet basil looks slightly different than Genovese, but they're very similar in flavor. Both varieties pair well with tomatoes, blueberries, and pine nuts. Thai basil has a zingy, lemony flavor, making it better suited for baking with citrus. Oregano is best known as Greek oregano, with its rich, peppery scent that brings you straight back to your favorite pizzeria. Mexican oregano is part of the verbena family, giving it a lemony aroma. Thyme has common, English, lemon, and French varieties. Common thyme and English thyme are almost identical, with the only noticeable difference being in the shape of their leaves. French thyme is sweeter, milder, and a little more tender than its counterparts. Lemon thyme, as the name suggests, has a distinct citrus scent and flavor. All varieties of thyme can be used interchangeably, but lemon thyme will undoubtedly elevate your baking with its unique flavor.

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Much like basil, mint has countless varieties, but the two used most in baking are peppermint and spearmint. The former is high in menthol, with a distinct peppery aroma. It's most used in sweet treats we typically associate with the holidays, pairing well with chocolate and coffee flavors. Spearmint is the most common culinary mint and complements many fruits, chocolate, and vanilla. A bit less common but particularly delicious is chocolate mint, which has a subtle cocoa fragrance and dark brown stems, and fruity-scented apple mint is perfect for teas. Cuban mint is better known as mojito mint due to its use in cocktails.

Whether you dedicate a plot in your outdoor garden or line your windowsill with small pots, growing and harvesting your fresh herbs is an easy way to ensure you always have the ingredients you need on hand, no matter the time of year. Most herbs, such as thyme, rosemary, and parsley, can be harvested as soon as they produce leaves. Others, such as basil and cilantro, must be at least 6 inches tall before harvesting so the plant will continue to grow.

When harvesting herbs, keep a few simple rules in mind. It's best to snip herbs in the cooler morning air. You should also harvest your herbs often enough so they don't bolt, or flower and bloom. Basil and chives tend to bolt quickly during the late summer months, and pruning the buds encourages the plant to continue to produce new leaves and extend its growing time. Tender herbs such as basil, dill, parsley, and cilantro can be harvested by the leaf or by the stem. Twiggy or woody herbs, including oregano, rosemary, and thyme, should be snipped at the stem. You can use the leaves and stems of tender herbs. To quickly strip leaves off woody stems, run your fingers along the stem against the direction the leaves are growing.

If you're not planning to use your harvested herbs right away, they will easily keep fresh for several days when properly stored. Add basil, mint, parsley, cilantro, and other leafy herbs to a small jar of water and keep it on your countertop; refrigeration isn't needed, and in the case of basil, the deep chill will cause the leaves to turn black and rot. On the other hand, sturdy oregano, rosemary, thyme, and the like are best kept by loosely wrapping them in a damp paper towel and then refrigerating them in a partially sealed plastic bag or container.

Fresh or Dried

To substitute dried herbs for fresh, use one-third of the amount. So, 1 tablespoon fresh = 1 teaspoon dried.

A perennially favorite way of using herbs is to make flavored butters to slather on all your fresh bakes. Simply stir a few tablespoons of any single or combination of herbs you like into a stick of softened butter until it's well combined. Refrigerate it in an airtight container, or you can shape it into a log on a piece of plastic wrap and freeze it for longer storage. You can also freeze plain chopped fresh herbs for future use; add herbs to the wells of ice cube trays or mini muffin cups, and fill with just enough water to cover the herbs. Once frozen solid, transfer the herb cubes to a resealable plastic bag and freeze. Just drain off the water from the thawed herbs to bake and cook with however you like.

If you gravitate to the sweet side, try flavored simple syrups. In a saucepan, bring equal parts water, granulated sugar, and fresh herbs to a low boil, stirring occasionally until the sugar dissolves. Remove from the heat, and let the herbs steep as the syrup cools completely. Strain the syrup into a resealable jar, and refrigerate it for 2 to 3 weeks. Brush the syrup onto warm cakes and breads for moisture, and stir it into your drinks.



Bake with Herbs

In this issue, don't miss:

Pesto-Swirled Babka,
page 57

Blackberry-Lavender Bread
with Lemon Glaze,
page 59

Tarte Soleil,
page 61

Chocolate-Mint Cream Pie,
page 63

Lemon and Thyme Olive Oil Cake,
page 64

Drying herbs is an excellent way to ensure you have a year-round supply, and it's so easy. Wash your herbs well, spread them in a single layer on clean dishcloths, and let them dry completely. Strip the leaves off the stems, and arrange them in a single layer on baking sheets; you don't need to spray or line the pans with anything as long as the herbs are completely dry (moisture will make them stick). Place the pans in a 200°F (93°C) oven until they are dry and brittle. It could happen as quickly as 30 to 45 minutes or as long as 1 to 1½ hours, depending on the herb, but the time is less important than ensuring the herbs are completely dried out. Once cooled, use your fingers to crumble the leaves into small bits, and store them in an airtight container for up to a year.

There's no right or wrong way when it comes to using fresh herbs in baking and cooking—it's all a matter of your personal taste and preference. As you look out into your garden at the verdant leaves of your herbs, take inspiration from knowing there is no limit to how you can bake them your own. 

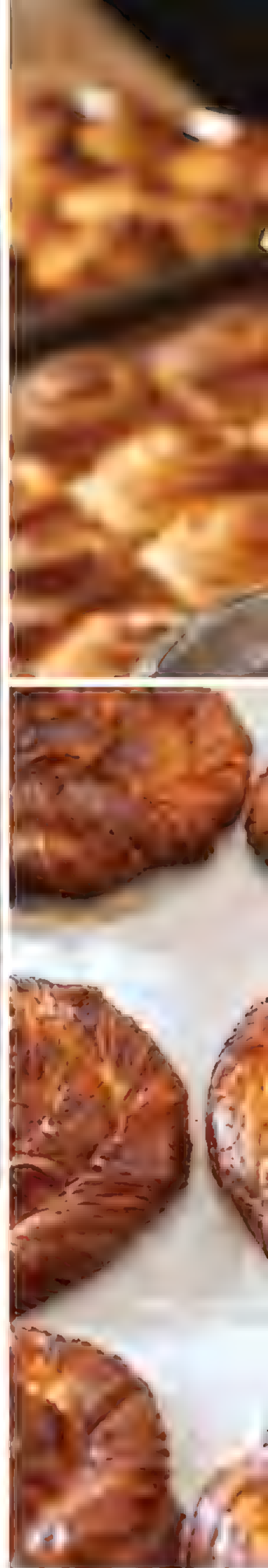


the BAKING HOURS

BY AMBER WILLIS
BY KYLE CARPENTER

*It's the dead of night in the heart of the Magic City,
but the day is dawning at Last Call Baking Co.*

While most of the city is still fast asleep, Last Call Baking Co., a lively bakery that opened in downtown Birmingham, Alabama, in 2022, just blocks away from *Bake from Scratch* headquarters, is slowly waking up for the day. Chanah (pronounced “honna”) Willis, the 27-year-old owner, leads a crew of passionate and energetic bakers. Together, they turn out delightful, unpredictable, and consistently delicious pastries. Each artfully captures the maker’s identity. They’re delicious proof that baking can reach incredible creative heights and deep spiritual feelings when translated through flaky, layered pastries.





To ensure locals have their fill of pastries, the staff at Last Call works in the middle of the night, prepping and baking trays of hand-glazed cinnamon rolls, coffee scrolls, morning buns, and the holy trinity of croissants—butter, almond, and chocolate—all of which have brought overwhelming praise and success to the new bakery. Last Call’s baking schedule is seemingly never-ending, blending seamlessly between night and day, and we get a glimpse behind the scenes to see how these artists create pastry magic.

It’s 3:16 a.m. on a clear and brisk spring morning, and the contrasting warmth from the bakery’s ovens and the inescapable scent of dough and butter welcomes us as we open the pale pink front door. At the start of his shift at 11 p.m., Jonathan, one of Last Call’s three full-time bakers, began mixing croissant dough. And by this time of the morning, he is showering massive muffin pans with sugar for their glorious kouign amman. He deftly shapes each square of dough by pinching the edges together, nestling them into the sugar-coated pans, and letting them proof while neatly brushing a legion of shaped croissants with egg wash. By his nimbleness, you would guess he’d been doing this for years, but Jonathan didn’t have any experience baking before this job. He fell in love with the friendly atmosphere of the bakery and knew he wanted to be a part of it.

Timers punctuate the relative silence as Jonathan continues to prepare glazes for the coffee scrolls and cinnamon rolls and the cinnamon sugar and fennel to dredge the morning buns; the baked pastries patiently await their final touches as they cool on a rack next to the ovens. By 5:14 a.m., a heavy haze of fragrant steam drifts to the ceiling and fills the space with the aroma of caramelized sugar as the kouign amman come out of the oven and get a scattering of flaky sea salt.

When Chanah arrives at 5:25 a.m., they exchange hugs and smiles, throw on an apron, and get to work. Chanah’s assurance is captivating as they whip piping hot baking sheets of massive coffee chocolate cookies out of the oven, banging them on the countertop and gently flattening the tops with a wide spatula. Their passion for baking began as a child, and by the time they were a tween, cooking and baking until all hours of the night and experimenting with pastry that even some advanced bakers would find intimidating became the norm. Freedom to create was

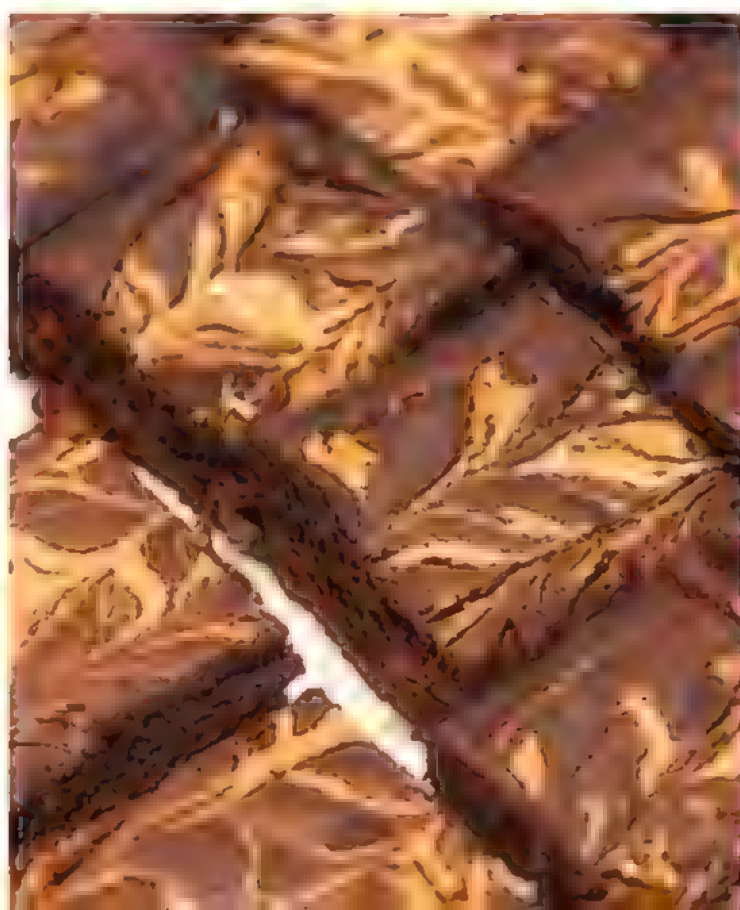
Chanah’s natural foundation growing up, as they were surrounded by a family of musicians, artists, and extreme hobbyists.

The food-obsessed child inside had them flirting with the idea of dropping out of Samford University and enrolling in culinary school. However, they persevered through their classes and graduated with a fine arts degree. Quickly after graduating, they realized their true muse—baking—had been quietly brewing away for years. Chanah immediately immersed themselves in restaurant culture to make ends meet and eventually poured all their energy into working in as many local bakeries as possible while working night shifts as a bartender. Last Call is a play on words of whenever Chanah shouted “last call” during their bartending days before closing for the evening. “I eventually lost my night job and morning gig once the [COVID-19] pandemic was in full swing,” they say. “The shutdown forced me to meditate on my journey up until that point.”

That’s when Chanah began baking at home, sharing playfully flavored yet refined pastries on social media and selling their boxed-up goods at local markets. They infused their pastries with a sense of personality, and the city embraced it. Soon after, Chanah realized they needed more space, and luckily, a local commercial kitchen offered a free space to make pastries and test new techniques. Before long, it became clear that Chanah had to expand to a brick-and-mortar to keep up with the overwhelming demand, and they found a home for Last Call in downtown Birmingham.

Now that the scrolls have cooled, Chanah hand-dips them in a coffee glaze. As quickly as they’re done with one task, another begins. They clear their station and whip out a giant pair of tweezers. Chanah starts fishing for rhubarb out of its blushing pond to top the Danish. They finish dressing them with a sprinkling of sesame seeds. It’s evident that this bakery takes pride in creativity and individuality over harsh guidelines about what should or shouldn’t be in their recipes. Tangy-spicy gochujang brushed onto croissant dough? Yes, please.

Jonathan is busy prepping and shaping the kouign Amman, brushing the croissants with egg wash, and putting the final touches on the berry Danish; Chanah starts the r day with dressing the pastries as they and the rest of the crew prepare to open their doors for the day.





Chanah has built invaluable relationships with local farmers and providers along the way, and Last Call's menu reflects what's in season. "I often turn to one of our full-time bakers, Frankie, to let him know I got a text from a farmer, and he will spit out a crazy concept. We riff from there." For Chanah, it's important to surround themselves not just with bakers but also artists and enthusiastic eaters who see an ingredient and think, "Well, what if we got weird with it?" They say, "A lot of times, we have a base recipe—whether it's our croissant dough or cookie dough—and play with whatever is seasonal and available to us, changing it ever so slightly." These innovative marvels earned them a nod this year from the James Beard Foundation for Emerging Chef.

A few feet away, pillows of plush dough magically appear on the immense butcher block in the center of the kitchen, stoically waiting to be sheeted and shaped into focaccia. The crew works with a quiet intensity, pirouetting between the butcher block, countertops, and pastry case as if in a choreographed ballet. A giant mixer appears out of nowhere, and the kitchen fills with so much life, more than Chanah could have ever dreamt. They began this venture just a few years before opening the doors to Last Call, whether they were ready for it or not.

"Last Call lives on my shoulders, and the surrounding weight is carried by my employees, who wake up every day and decide to help shift that weight any way they can," says Chanah. "Now that I exist within a bakery space with others, my focus, drive, and attention are stretched and pulled in ways that I just was in no way prepared for. Opening our space has driven me to create personal boundaries, become much more empathetic and community-focused and aware of the effect that our business has in our city."

While the bakery usually sells out within an hour or so of opening, they also deliver pastries to other local shops, including June Coffee (just next door), Punch Love Coffee, and Santos Coffee. Frankie and Chanah stack the pastries for deliveries, nestling

them safely into their designated black crates. The team makes more than 500 pastries daily on weekends, including favorites like their bewitching butter croissants and kouign amann. "I remember thinking 170 on a Saturday was a lot, and here we are a year and a half later. Wild," says Chanah.

At 6:45 a.m., after all the pastries have finished baking, Frankie starts bringing armfuls of the day's cooled pastries to the pastry case. Sweet and spicy gochujang twists, vibrant passion fruit bars, towering cheese-laden biscuits, tahini-swirled brownies, and almond croissants finished with a theatrical storm of confectioners' sugar are carefully arranged in their assigned seats along the pastry case.

The pink hue of the morning light breaks into a beautiful baby blue as we start to see the first new faces of the day. As the opening shift begins arriving, a line of customers starts forming outside the door. At once, the clanging of pans and the kitchen chatter escalate as there's a mad rush to clean before the bakery opens. I spy Chanah staring at the pastries piled high, ready for the day, as customers begin filtering through the door. They can't help but feel blessed as they watch people experiencing the flavors and overall essence of what they created. It's a very intimate expression—like giving someone a big hug and saying, “I made this for you.”

If you follow the precession that takes shape every day outside of Last Call, it will lead you someplace special: a hard-to-define bakery with elevated respect for pastries, which it shares openly with the city as a staple, not a luxury—the kind that makes waiting in line worthwhile.





COFFEE CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES

Makes about 18 cookies

Recipe adapted from Chanah Willis

- 1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter
- 2¾ cups plus 1 tablespoon (360 grams) bread flour
- 1 teaspoon (5 grams) baking soda
- ¾ teaspoon (2.25 grams) kosher salt
- 1½ cups plus 1½ teaspoons (300 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar
- ½ cup plus 2 teaspoons (75 grams) granulated sugar
- 2 large eggs (100 grams)
- 2 large egg yolks (38 grams)
- 1 teaspoon (7 grams) molasses
- 5 tablespoons (25 grams) espresso powder
- 1 tablespoon (18 grams) vanilla bean paste
- 1½ cups (255 grams) chocolate pistoles (see Note)
- Flaked sea salt, for sprinkling

1. In a medium light-colored skillet, melt butter over medium heat. Cook, stirring or swirling skillet frequently, until butter turns a medium-brown color and has a nutty aroma. Immediately pour butter into a heatproof bowl, and let cool for 10 to 15 minutes. (It should still be melted and a little warm but not hot.)
2. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking soda, and kosher salt.
3. In a large bowl, whisk together sugars, eggs, egg yolks, and molasses until light and fluffy. Whisk in cooled melted butter, espresso powder, and vanilla bean paste until well combined. Fold in flour mixture until no dry streaks remain. Fold in chocolate.
4. Using a ¼-cup spring-loaded scoop, scoop dough (about 75 grams each) onto a parchment paper-lined baking sheet, and refrigerate for at least 1 hour or up to overnight.
5. Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C). Line baking sheets with parchment paper.
6. Place dough at least 3 inches apart on prepared pans.
7. Bake for 7 minutes. Lightly tap pans on countertop to slightly flatten cookies. Bake until edges are browned and centers are set, 5 to 8 minutes more. Sprinkle with sea salt. Let cool on pans for 5 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool on wire racks for 15 minutes. Best enjoyed warm. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days. 🍪

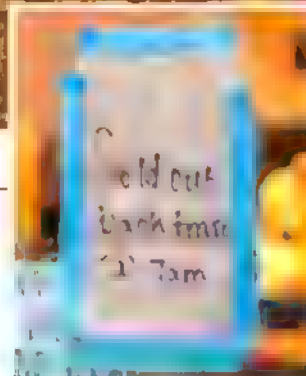
Note: *Pistoles are slightly thick oval-shaped disks of chocolate that melt well and create pockets of chocolate within the cookies; coarsely chopped bittersweet chocolate is a good substitute. Chocolate chips can also be used, but they will hold their shape and only soften.*

➔ Get the recipe for Chanah's Almond and Whole-Wheat Ruby Chocolate Cookies at bakefromscratch.com.

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bread box

POWERED BY Red Star® Yeast

FANTASTIC FOCACCIA

*Brighten your summer days with these
delicious twists on the Italian classic*

PHOTOGRAPHY BY KYLE CARPENTER / RECIPE DEVELOPMENT BY AMANDA STABILE
FOOD STYLING BY AARON CONRAD / STYLING BY MAGGIE HILL

Harissa and Brie
Focaccia, page 40



Cinnamon Roll
Focaccia, page 40

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more spectacular
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HARISSA AND BRIE FOCACCIA

Makes 1 (13x9-inch) loaf

The soft and chewy interior makes this loaf perfect for an afternoon snack or even as a sandwich bread. Drizzled with hot honey, this cheesy focaccia is bursting with rich, spicy flavor in every bite.

- 1¾ cups (420 grams) water, room temperature (70°F/21°C to 75°F/24°C)
- 6 tablespoons (84 grams) extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 4¼ cups (540 grams) bread flour
- 3½ teaspoons (10.5 grams) kosher salt
- 1 (0.25-ounce) package (7 grams) instant yeast*
- ½ cup (120 grams) harissa paste
- ½ cup (80 grams) ¼-inch-sliced onion
- 4 ounces (113 grams) Brie cheese, cut into small wedges
- Flaked sea salt, for sprinkling
- ¼ cup (85 grams) honey
- 1 teaspoon (5 grams) apple cider vinegar
- ¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper

1. In a large bowl, combine 1¾ cups (420 grams) room temperature water and 2 tablespoons (28 grams) oil. Add flour, kosher salt, and yeast. Stir with a large rubber spatula or wooden spoon until a cohesive dough forms. (Dough will be shaggy and tacky.) Cover and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°F/24°C) for 1½ hours, folding dough in bowl every 30 minutes. (To fold, use wet or oiled hands to reach under one side of dough; gently stretch up, and fold over center; repeat on all sides of dough. See page 113.)

2. Line a 13x9-inch baking pan with parchment paper, letting excess extend over sides of pan. Brush 2 tablespoons (28 grams) oil onto parchment.

3. Turn out dough into prepared pan; using just your fingertips, gently stretch dough to about a 10x8-inch rectangle. (If dough is tight and will not stretch completely, let stand for 5 to 10 minutes and then try again.) Spread harissa onto dough. Starting at one short side, carefully roll up dough into a log. Place dough lengthwise, seam side down, in pan. Let stand for 10 minutes. Using your fingertips,

gently stretch dough to fill pan. Cover and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°F/24°C) until doubled in size and puffed, 45 minutes to 1 hour.

4. Preheat oven to 425°F (220°C).

5. Dimple dough using your fingertips, touching pan through dough without tearing dough. Drizzle with remaining 2 tablespoons (28 grams) oil. Top with onion and cheese; sprinkle with sea salt.

6. Bake until golden brown and an instant-read thermometer inserted in center registers 190°F (88°C), about 20 minutes. Let cool in pan for 10 minutes. Using excess parchment as handles, remove from pan.

7. In a small microwave-safe bowl, heat honey, vinegar, and red pepper on high in 10-second intervals, stirring between each, until honey is fluid. Drizzle onto warm focaccia. Serve warm. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

**We used Platinum® Yeast from Red Star®.*

CINNAMON ROLL FOCACCIA

Makes 1 (13x9-inch) loaf

Though focaccia is traditionally topped with just olive oil and herbs, we've found our new favorite breakfast bread by swapping savory for sugar and spice.

- 1¾ cups (420 grams) water, room temperature (70°F/21°C to 75°F/24°C)
- 4 tablespoons (56 grams) extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 4¼ cups (540 grams) bread flour
- 3½ teaspoons (10.5 grams) kosher salt
- 1 tablespoon (12 grams) granulated sugar
- 1 (0.25-ounce) package (7 grams) instant yeast*
- ⅓ cup (73 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons (12 grams) ground cinnamon
- 3 tablespoons (42 grams) unsalted butter, melted
- 2 ounces (57 grams) cream cheese, room temperature
- ⅓ cup (40 grams) confectioners' sugar
- 2 tablespoons (30 grams) whole milk

1. In a large bowl, combine 1¾ cups (420 grams) room temperature water and 2 tablespoons (28 grams) oil; stir in flour, salt, granulated sugar, and yeast. a rubber spatula or wooden spoon until a cohesive dough forms. (Dough will be shaggy and tacky.) Cover and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°F/24°C) for 1½ hours, folding dough in bowl every 30 minutes. (To fold, use wet or oiled hands to reach under one side of dough; gently stretch up, and fold over center; repeat on all sides of dough. See page 113.)

2. Line a 13x9-inch baking pan with parchment paper, letting excess extend over sides of pan. Brush remaining 2 tablespoons (28 grams) oil onto parchment.

3. Turn out dough into prepared pan; using just your fingertips, gently stretch dough to about a 10x8-inch rectangle. (If dough is tight and will not stretch completely, let stand for 5 to 10 minutes and then try again.)

4. In a small bowl, stir together brown sugar and cinnamon. Sprinkle half of sugar mixture (about ⅓ cup or 43 grams) onto dough. Starting at one short side, carefully roll up dough into a log. Place dough lengthwise, seam side down, in pan. Let stand for 10 minutes. Using your fingertips, gently stretch dough to fill pan. Cover and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°F/24°C) until doubled in size and jiggly, 45 minutes to 1 hour.

5. Preheat oven to 425°F (220°C).

6. Dimple dough using your fingertips, touching pan through dough without tearing dough.

7. Add melted butter to remaining brown sugar mixture, whisking until combined. Spoon onto dough.

8. Bake until golden brown and an instant-read thermometer inserted in center registers 190°F (88°C), 15 to 20 minutes. Let cool in pan for 10 minutes. Using excess parchment as handles, remove from pan.

9. In another bowl, whisk together cream cheese and confectioners' sugar; whisk in milk until smooth. Drizzle onto warm focaccia. Serve warm. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days. 🍴

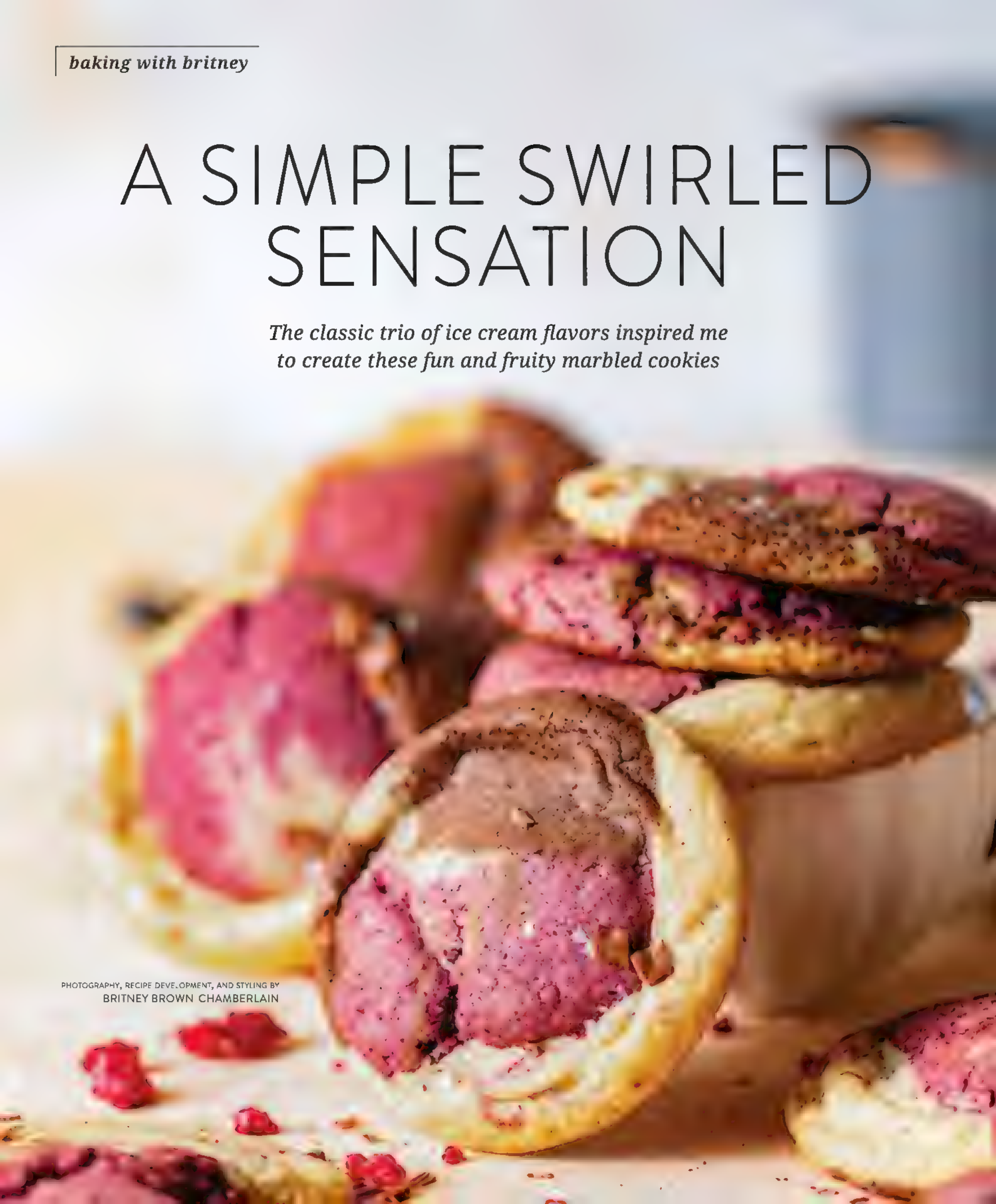
**We used Platinum® Yeast from Red Star®.*

baking with britney

A SIMPLE SWIRLED SENSATION

The classic trio of ice cream flavors inspired me to create these fun and fruity marbled cookies

PHOTOGRAPHY, RECIPE DEVELOPMENT, AND STYLING BY
BRITNEY BROWN CHAMBERLAIN



RASPBERRY NEAPOLITAN COOKIES

Makes about 14 cookies

Picture this: chocolate, raspberry, and vanilla cookie dough baked together to form a buttery, soft, and chewy cookie! You've got the richness of chocolate, the zing of raspberries, and the smoothness of vanilla. When they mingle together, it forms a beautiful dance of sweetness and tartness. Trust me—once you take a bite, you'll be hooked.

- 1 ounce (30 grams) freeze-dried raspberries
- 2¼ cups (281 grams) all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon (5 grams) baking soda
- ½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt
- ¾ cup (170 grams) salted butter, room temperature
- 1 cup (200 grams) granulated sugar
- 1 large egg (50 grams), room temperature
- 1 large egg yolk (19 grams), room temperature
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract
- 1 tablespoon (5 grams) Dutch process cocoa powder

1. Add freeze-dried raspberries to a food processor, and pulse until a powder forms and crumbs are uniform. It's OK if the seeds don't completely break down; this adds texture and chewiness to the cookies. If you don't want raspberry seeds in your cookies, sift the powder through a fine-mesh sieve to remove them.
2. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line baking sheets with parchment paper.
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking soda, and salt.
4. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter on medium speed until smooth and creamy, about 2 minutes. Add sugar, and beat until light and fluffy, about 2 minutes. Scrape down the sides of the bowl, and add the egg, egg yolk, and vanilla. Beat on medium-high speed until light and fluffy and eggs are fully incorporated, about 1 minute. Scrape down the sides of the bowl again, and add the flour mixture. Beat on low speed just until combined, about 30 seconds.
5. Divide the dough into three equal portions (about 240 grams each), and place in individual bowls. Stir the raspberry powder into one portion of

Having visited more than 33 countries, Maryland-based Britney Brown-Chamberlain draws inspiration for her blog, *Britney Breaks Bread*, from each region she encounters, making Britney a deliciously welcome addition to our magazine as the *Bake from Scratch* 2024 contributing editor. Britney is releasing her debut cookbook, *Bake Until Golden Brown*, that's filled with her sweet and savory heirloom recipes, modern twists on classic desserts, and more. Preorder it now at hoffmanmediastore.com.

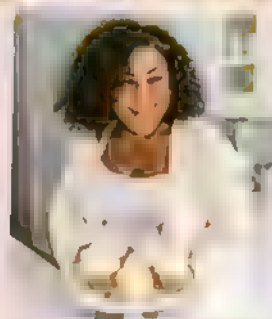
➔ Follow Britney on Instagram at [@britneybreaksbread](https://www.instagram.com/britneybreaksbread) and her website, britneybreaksbread.com.

- dough until it's fully incorporated and dough is pink. Stir the cocoa powder into another portion of dough until it's fully incorporated and dough is brown. Leave remaining dough as is.
6. Using a 1-tablespoon (about 17 grams) scoop, scoop each portion of dough, and roll into balls. Press together one vanilla ball, one raspberry ball, and one chocolate ball, and then roll into a ball again. Place about 2 inches apart on prepared pans. Repeat the procedure with the remaining dough balls. (You might have a bit more raspberry cookie dough, so the last few cookies might be mostly raspberry).
7. Bake, one pan at a time, until edges are set and centers are slightly puffed, 10 to 12 minutes. Let the cookies cool on the baking sheet for 5 minutes prior to removing onto a wire rack to cool completely. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days. 🍪

✱ *britney's tip*

Recipe can be prepped through step 6, covered, and refrigerated overnight. Bake as directed, adding about 3 more minutes to baking time.

bake until
golden brown



SEMIFREDDO

Discover the secrets behind this Italian classic, from mastering its fluffy texture to blending in an array of flavors, to create a summertime delight

PHOTOGRAPHY BY KYLE CARPENTER / RECIPE DEVELOPMENT BY AMANDA STABILE
FOOD STYLING BY AARON CONRAD AND KATIE MOON DICKERSON / STYLING BY MAGGIE HILL





Semifreddo, which translates to “half cold” or “half frozen,” is an elegant dessert that differs from ice cream in that it has a semifrozen texture, as its name implies. Our recipe achieves its ethereal texture by delicately folding a frothy egg mixture into a billowing bowl of whipped cream and stashing it away in the freezer until it’s time to serve. The result is a light and luxurious mousse-like consistency, perfect for enjoying on a hot summer day. Once made, it can be frozen for several weeks if tightly wrapped, making it an ideal make-ahead dessert for dinner parties or a spontaneous midafternoon indulgence.



VANILLA SEMIFREDDO

Makes 12 to 16 servings

The beauty of this dessert lay in its versatility. The classic creamy vanilla base can be enhanced by drizzling melted chocolate stracciatella-style, forming little shreds that melt on your tongue. Topping it with delicate Chocolate Curls adds the perfect textural contrast. Or you can swirl the smooth vanilla base with the tangy sweetness of Roasted Blueberries and tart lemon nestled atop a buttery graham cracker crust, offering an ideal balance of sweetness and crunch. You can even fold your favorite fresh fruit or beloved preserves into the Vanilla Semifreddo base. The options are endless, but the result is always impossibly light and refreshingly cool!

- 1½ cups (360 grams) cold heavy whipping cream
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract
- ½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt
- 2 large eggs (100 grams), room temperature
- ⅓ cup (67 grams) granulated sugar

1. Line an 8½x4½-inch metal loaf pan with plastic wrap, letting excess extend 2 inches over all sides of pan. Freeze until ready to use or for at least 30 minutes.
2. In a large bowl, beat cold cream, vanilla, and salt with a hand mixer at medium-high speed until stiff peaks form, 3 to 4 minutes. Refrigerate until ready to use.
3. In a heatproof bowl, whisk together eggs and sugar. Place bowl over a saucepan of simmering water. Cook, whisking frequently, until sugar is melted and an instant-read thermometer registers at least 160°F (71°C). Remove from heat. Beat egg mixture with a hand mixer at medium-high speed until mixture has cooled down and tripled in volume and has a thick and ribbonlike consistency, about 5 minutes.
4. Add egg mixture to whipped cream mixture, and gently fold until combined and no streaks remain. Spoon into prepared pan, smoothing top with an offset spatula. Cover with excess plastic wrap, and freeze until firm, at least 5 hours, preferably overnight.
5. Let semifreddo stand at room temperature for 5 minutes to soften slightly. Using excess plastic wrap as handles, remove from pan, and slice as desired. Freeze in an airtight container for up to 2 weeks.

STRACCIATELLA SEMIFREDDO

Makes 12 to 16 servings

Vanilla Semifreddo (recipe precedes)

4 ounces (113 grams) semisweet chocolate, melted and cooled

Garnish: Chocolate Curls (recipe follows)

1. Prepare Vanilla Semifreddo through step 2.
2. Drizzle one-third of melted chocolate all over whipped cream mixture. Freeze until chocolate is set, 4 to 5 minutes. Using a silicone spatula, break up chocolate and fold into whipped cream mixture. Repeat drizzling, freezing, and folding with remaining melted chocolate in two additions. Refrigerate.
3. Proceed with Vanilla Semifreddo recipe from step 3. Garnish with Chocolate Curls, if desired.

CHOCOLATE CURLS

Makes 15 to 18 curls

2 ounces (57 grams) bittersweet chocolate, finely chopped
2 teaspoons (10 grams) neutral oil

1. In a small microwave-safe bowl, heat chocolate on high in 30-second intervals, stirring between each, until melted and smooth. Stir in oil. Spread chocolate mixture into a thin, even layer on bottom of an 18x13-inch baking sheet, leaving about a 2-inch border on all sides. Freeze until hardened enough to curl when scraped, 4 to 5 minutes, checking every minute and testing corner with a small metal spatula.
2. Working along one long side and using a small metal spatula, scrape chocolate into curls. (If chocolate gets too soft, freeze for about 1 minute; if chocolate is too cold and breaking when scraped, let stand at room temperature for about 1 minute.) Freeze curls until ready to use.

LEMON-BLUEBERRY SEMIFREDDO

Makes 12 to 16 servings

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup (67 grams) finely ground graham cracker crumbs
3 tablespoons (42 grams) unsalted butter, melted
2 tablespoons (24 grams) granulated sugar

Vanilla Semifreddo (recipe precedes)

2 teaspoons (2 grams) lemon zest
Roasted Blueberries (recipe follows)

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line an 8½x4½-inch loaf pan with parchment paper, letting excess extend over all sides of pan.
2. In a medium bowl, stir together graham cracker crumbs, melted butter, and sugar. Press mixture into bottom of prepared pan.
3. Bake until set and fragrant, about 10 minutes. Let cool completely in pan. Freeze until ready to use or for at least 30 minutes.
4. Prepare Vanilla Semifreddo recipe from step 2, adding lemon zest with cream, vanilla, and salt, through folding egg mixture into whipped cream mixture in step 4. Add half of Roasted Blueberries, and gently fold until barely mixed in and just swirled. (Do not overmix.) Proceed with Vanilla Semifreddo recipe through step 5.
5. Top with remaining Roasted Blueberries and serve immediately, or freeze until ready to serve.

Note: When removing the Lemon-Blueberry Semifreddo from the loaf pan, it might not come out right away. Let it stand for a few minutes and warm the corners of the pan with your hands. Then the semifreddo will come away from the corners and come out easily. Alternatively, lightly wave a handheld kitchen torch back and forth on the corners and sides of the pan to help release the semifreddo.

ROASTED BLUEBERRIES

Makes about 2 cups

2 pounds (908 grams) fresh blueberries
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (50 grams) granulated sugar

1. Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C). Line a rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. On prepared pan, toss together blueberries and sugar; spread in a single layer.
3. Bake until juices have released and thickened, 35 to 40 minutes, stirring halfway through baking. Let cool completely on pan. Use immediately, or refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 1 day.

Tools of the Trade

Here are a few standout tools to help you make the perfect semifreddo

HAND MIXER: A hand mixer is essential for recipes needing whipping of separate components before folding together. It easily moves between bowls, saving time, and minimizes cleanup. If you don't have a hand mixer, a stand mixer will work just as well. It's tempting to walk away from a stand mixer when it's running but stay close and carefully monitor the components to ensure they are properly aerated.

LOAF PAN: Using a metal loaf pan cools down the mixture quickly to speed up the setting process. But if you only have glass or ceramic pans, don't worry; these materials will still provide a sturdy base for your dessert to set up beautifully.

INSTANT-READ

THERMOMETER: In our test kitchen, we rely on our trusty instant-read thermometer to ensure the egg and sugar mixture reaches 160°F (71°C). This helps us guarantee that the eggs are pasteurized and the sugar has completely melted into the mixture before folding it into the fluffy whipped cream.

MIXING BOWLS: A large, wide bowl is perfect for whipping cream into airy clouds and is the ideal vessel for gently folding in the remaining ingredients before freezing.

SPATULAS: A wide silicone spatula is essential for its versatility in stirring and folding ingredients with ease. An offset spatula gives you optimal control when gracefully spreading the semifreddo in the pan, creating perfect swoops on top of the Lemon-Blueberry Semifreddo, and smoothing the sides of the semifreddo before serving. And a small metal spatula is ideal for shaping those delicate Chocolate Curls adorning the Stracciatella Semifreddo.



The Basic Method

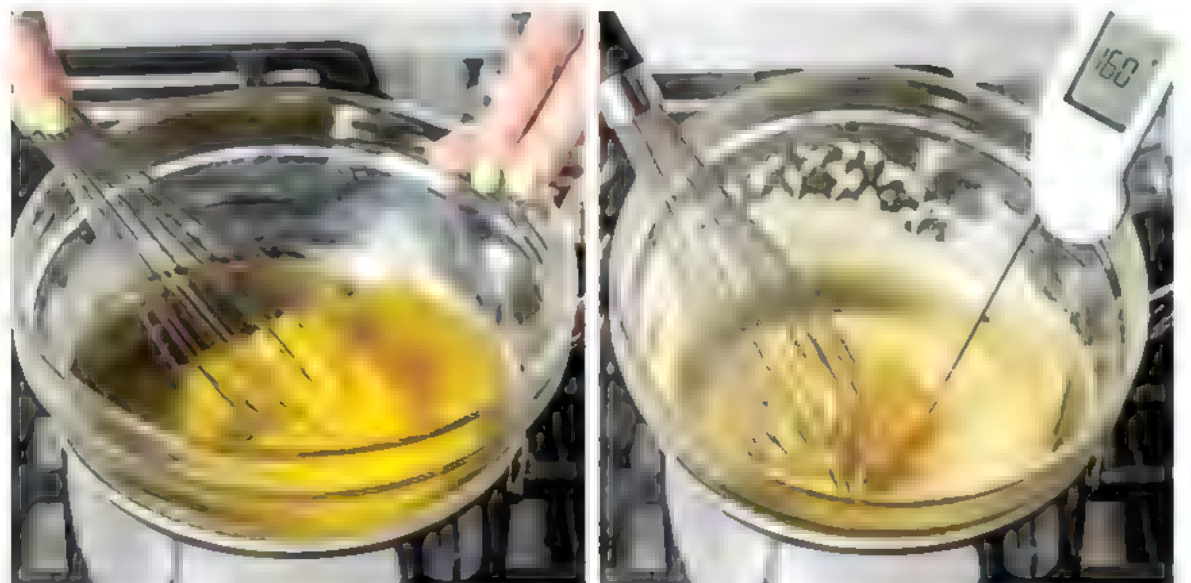
Our tutorial is designed to help you understand the essential elements of semifreddo: learn the art of folding and how to whip cream to perfection, resulting in a perfectly fluffy, mousse-like texture

PREPPING THE PAN: To easily remove the semifreddo from the pan, it's essential to first line it with parchment paper or plastic wrap. Leaving a 2-inch overhang on all the sides acts as a sling to help lift the semifreddo out of the pan when it's time to serve. When preparing the Lemon-Blueberry Semifreddo, opt for parchment paper since its graham cracker crust requires baking. When ready to serve, the paper easily peels off the semifreddo's frozen surface without damaging the golden crust.



WHIP IT: When whipping the cream, it's important to use cold cream, as it helps to achieve maximum volume quickly. When you start to whip cream, air bubbles are introduced, and when the cream is cold, these bubbles are held in place by a network of tiny droplets of solid fat. This network allows the cream to expand into a light and airy mass. Begin whipping at medium-low speed until the cream thickens, and then gradually increase the speed to avoid splattering. You can tell you are almost there when you see sharp trails left by the beaters. The goal is to achieve a literal stiff peak when lifting the beaters from the bowl. Be careful not to overbeat, as this can cause the fat globules in the cream to clump together, resulting in a grainy texture and potential separation into butter and buttermilk.

SILKY SMOOTH: Semifreddo is typically made by folding whipped cream with either a French *pâte à bombe* (egg yolks beaten with hot sugar syrup) or an Italian meringue (beating hot sugar syrup into whipped egg whites until glossy and stiff). Our recipe streamlines this process by combining elements of both techniques—saving time and ensuring the eggs reach a food-safe temperature. This method results in a smooth texture and enhanced fluffiness.





RIBBON STAGE: The ribbon stage refers to the frothy mixture formed when eggs and sugar are beaten together. The mixture will lighten in color and thicken significantly, resembling foam. When lifting the beaters from the bowl, watch as the mixture falls back in thick trails. The ribbon lines should remain suspended on top, distinctly visible on the surface for a few moments before slowly disappearing.



THE ART OF FOLDING: Starting at the center of the bowl, cut straight down the center with a wide, flexible spatula all the way to the bottom of the bowl. Scrape toward you along the bottom of the bowl, continue up the side, and scoop the mixture over the top. Rotate your bowl a quarter turn and repeat until just combined. Once you achieve a uniform mixture without streaks or separation, you're done.



Stracciatella Style

In the charming city of Bergamo, Italy, back in 1961, Enrico Panattoni, owner of La Marianna *gelateria* created stracciatella gelato, which was inspired by the traditional Italian stracciatella (meaning “little rags” or “little shreds”) soup. This beloved creation is made by delicately drizzling melted chocolate onto smooth vanilla gelato. As the chocolate meets the gelato’s surface, it freezes, forming delicate shards that are gently broken up as the gelato churns.

To re-create the irresistible allure of stracciatella in semifreddo, make sure your melted chocolate is at the perfect fluid consistency—warm enough to drizzle but not hot. Drizzle it onto the chilled whipped cream mixture, crisscrossing and weaving back and forth. As the chocolate hits the cold cream mixture, it swiftly solidifies, forming intricate threads that are folded into the cream mixture, promising a luxurious, melt-in-your-mouth experience.





Time to Serve

After the semifreddo has been patiently waiting in the icy depths of your freezer, it's time to serve. Slowly peel the plastic wrap and parchment paper from the semifreddo and gently place it onto your serving plate. Let it rest for a few minutes on your countertop and then use the edge of an offset spatula to smooth out any wrinkles left on its surface. Add the final elegant flourish of Chocolate Curls to the Stracciatella Semifreddo or gleaming Roasted Blueberries atop the Lemon-Blueberry Semifreddo. All that's left is to slice, serve, and savor every velvety bite. 🍰



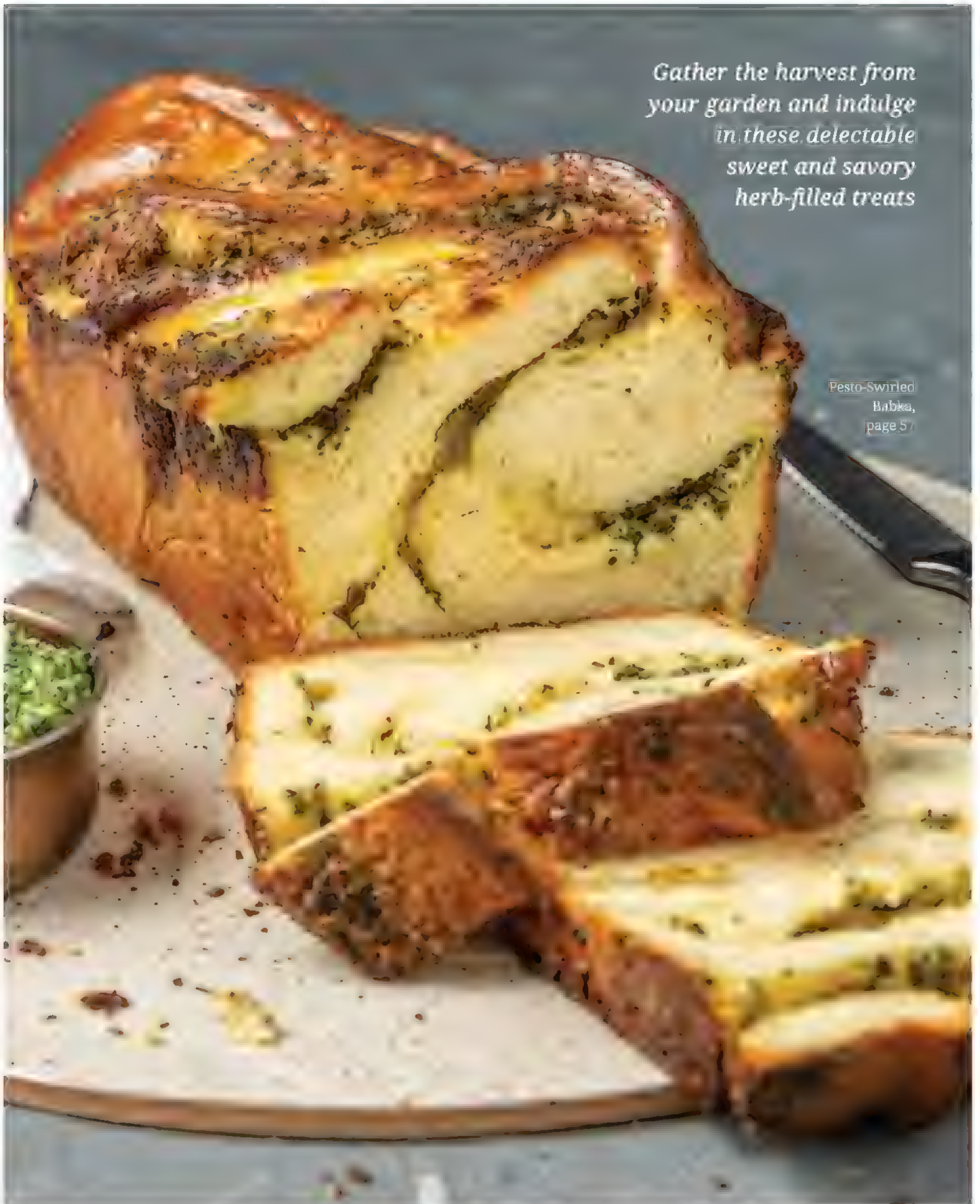


baking with
**SUMMER
HERBS**

PHOTOGRAPHY BY KYLE CARPENTER
RECIPE DEVELOPMENT BY OLA AGBODZA
FOOD STYLING BY AARON CONRAD
STYLING BY MAGGIE HILL

*Gather the harvest from
your garden and indulge
in these delectable
sweet and savory
herb-filled treats*

Pesto-Swirled
Babka,
page 57





Lemon and Thyme
Olive Oil Cake,
page 64



Tarte Soleil,
page 61

PESTO-SWIRLED BABKA

Makes 1 (8½x4½-inch) loaf

Our savory spin on the traditionally sweet twisted bread is fluffy, buttery, cheesy, and packed with bold herb flavor. Serve leftover pesto as a dip for your babka, or spread it on sliced bread to jazz up your sandwiches.

- 2½ cups (313 grams) plus 2 tablespoons (16 grams) all-purpose flour, divided, plus more for dusting
- 1 tablespoon (12 grams) granulated sugar
- 1½ teaspoons (4.5 grams) instant yeast
- 1¼ teaspoons (5.25 grams) kosher salt, divided
- ¼ cup (57 grams) unsalted butter
- ¼ cup (60 grams) plus 1 tablespoon (15 grams) water, divided
- ¼ cup (60 grams) whole milk
- 2 large eggs (100 grams), room temperature and divided
- ½ cup (113 grams) cream cheese, softened
- ½ cup (113 grams) crescenza cheese*
- 1 large egg yolk (19 grams)
- Evergreen Basil Pesto (recipe follows)
- 1 tablespoon (14 grams) olive oil

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer, whisk together 1 cup (125 grams) flour, sugar, yeast, and 1¼ teaspoons (3.75 grams) salt by hand.
2. In a small saucepan, heat butter, ¼ cup (60 grams) water, and milk over medium-low heat until butter is melted and an

- instant-read thermometer registers 120°F (49°C) to 130°F (54°C). Add warm butter mixture to flour mixture. Using the paddle attachment, beat at medium-low speed until combined. Add 1 egg (50 grams), and beat until combined. With mixer on low speed, gradually add 1½ cups (188 grams) flour, beating just until combined and stopping to scrape sides of bowl.
3. Switch to the dough hook attachment. Beat at low speed until a soft, somewhat sticky dough forms, 5 to 7 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl and dough hook; add up to remaining 2 tablespoons (16 grams) flour, 1 tablespoon (8 grams) at a time, if dough is too sticky. Turn out dough onto a very lightly floured surface, and shape into a smooth round.
 4. Lightly oil a large bowl. Place dough in bowl, turning to grease top. Cover and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°F/24°C) until doubled in size, 30 to 45 minutes.
 5. Turn out dough onto a very lightly floured surface, and gently press into an 8x6-inch rectangle. Loosely wrap in plastic wrap. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour or up to overnight.
 6. Spray an 8½x4½-inch loaf pan with cooking spray. Line pan with parchment paper, letting excess extend over all sides of pan.
 7. In small bowl, whisk together cream cheese, crescenza, egg yolk, and remaining ½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) salt until well combined and smooth.

8. On a lightly floured surface, roll dough into a 13x10-inch rectangle (about ¼ inch thick). Using a small offset spatula, spread cheese mixture onto dough, leaving a ½-inch border on both short sides and one long side. Spread ⅓ cup (78 grams) Evergreen Basil Pesto on cheese mixture as desired. Starting at long side opposite border, roll up dough into a log, and pinch seam to seal. Gently lift log at each end, and stretch to 14 inches long. Place seam side down, making sure seam is off to one side instead of in center. Using a sharp serrated knife, cut in half lengthwise (A). Turn halves cut side up, and place in an "X" (B). Twist top half of "X" twice (C); pinch ends, and tuck under. Repeat with bottom half of "X" (D). Using your hands, place in prepared pan, making sure to keep cut sides up and ends tucked (E). Cover and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°F/24°C) until puffed, 30 minutes to 1 hour.
9. Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C).
10. In another small bowl, whisk together remaining 1 egg (50 grams) and remaining 1 tablespoon (15 grams) water. Using a pastry brush, brush egg wash on top of dough.
11. Bake until golden brown and an instant-read thermometer inserted in center registers 190°F (88°C), 40 to 50 minutes, covering with foil after 20 minutes of baking to prevent excess browning. Brush with olive oil. Let cool in pan for 10 minutes. Using excess



parchment as handles, remove from pan, and let cool completely on a wire rack. Serve with remaining Evergreen Basil Pesto.

**We used BelGioioso® Crescenza-Stracchino™ Cheese.*

Note: Crescenza cheese, also known as stracchino, is a mild-flavored and soft, almost spreadable Italian cheese that melts very well.

EVERGREEN BASIL PESTO

Makes about ¾ cup

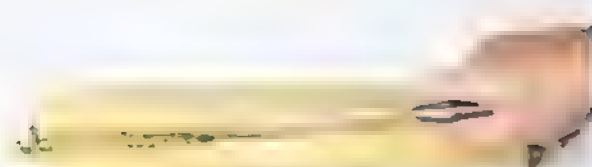
- 2 cups (48 grams) fresh basil leaves
- ½ cup (22 grams) fresh spinach leaves
- 3 tablespoons (27 grams) pine nuts, toasted (see page 113)
- 2 cloves garlic (3 grams), minced
- 1 teaspoon (1 gram) lemon zest
- 1 tablespoon (15 grams) fresh lemon juice
- ¼ cup (25 grams) freshly grated Parmesan cheese*
- ¼ cup (56 grams) extra-virgin olive oil
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt
- ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper

1. Fill a large bowl with ice water.
2. Bring a small saucepan of water to a boil over medium-high heat. Working in batches if needed, add basil and spinach; cook, stirring occasionally, until vibrant green and wilted, 30 seconds to 1 minute. Remove using a slotted spoon, and immediately transfer to ice water bath. Let stand until cooled, about 30 seconds. Drain well; thoroughly squeeze dry.
3. In the work bowl of a small food processor, pulse pine nuts, garlic, and lemon zest and juice until coarsely ground. Add cheese, oil, salt, and pepper; pulse until combined. Add drained basil and spinach, and pulse until finely chopped and well combined, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 1 week.

**We used BelGioioso® Parmesan Cheese.*

*pro tip

Blanching and shocking, the process of briefly cooking fruits, vegetables, and herbs in boiling water until they're bright in color and then immediately submerging them in a bowl of ice water to stop the cooking process, preserves the food's vibrant fresh color and helps keep it from turning brown or gray during storage.



A



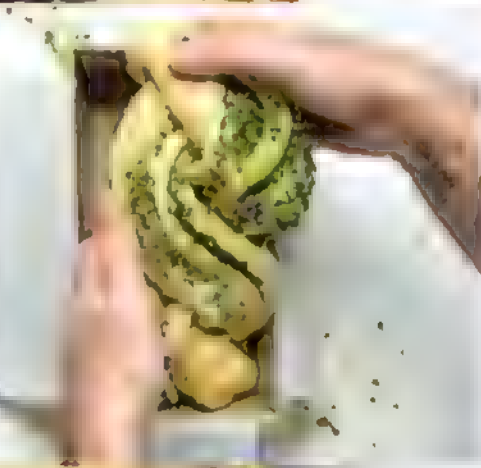
B



C



D



E



BLACKBERRY-LAVENDER BREAD WITH LEMON GLAZE

Makes 1 (8½x4½-inch) loaf

Although all varieties of lavender, a member of the mint family, are technically edible, culinary-grade lavender contains less of the essential oils that give it its unique taste and aroma, so you get a subtle citrusy note that complements rather than an assertive floral flavor that overpowers.

Bread:

- 2½ cups (312 grams) all-purpose flour
- 2½ teaspoons (12.5 grams) baking powder
- ¾ teaspoon (2.25 grams) kosher salt
- 6 ounces (170 grams) fresh blackberries, halved and divided
- 1¼ cups (250 grams) granulated sugar
- 3 large eggs (150 grams), room temperature
- 4 teaspoons (4 grams) lemon zest
- 2 teaspoons (1 gram) dried culinary-grade lavender (see Note)

- ⅓ cup (76 grams) unsalted butter, melted and cooled
- ¼ cup (56 grams) vegetable oil
- ½ cup (120 grams) sour cream, room temperature
- 2 teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla extract

Glaze:

- 1½ cups (180 grams) confectioners' sugar
- 2 tablespoons (30 grams) fresh lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon (14 grams) unsalted butter, melted

Garnish: dried culinary-grade lavender, fresh blackberries

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Spray an 8½x4½-inch loaf pan with baking spray with flour.
2. For bread: In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, and salt; gently stir in 5 ounces (142 grams) blackberries.
3. In a large bowl, whisk together granulated sugar, eggs, lemon zest, and lavender until light and fluffy, about

2 minutes. Whisk in melted butter, oil, sour cream, and vanilla until well combined. Stir in flour mixture just until combined. Spread batter into prepared pan; press remaining 1 ounce (28 grams) blackberries in top of batter.

4. Bake until golden brown and a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, 1 hour and 20 minutes to 1½ hours, covering with foil after 40 minutes of baking to prevent excess browning. Let cool in pan for 10 minutes. Remove from pan, and let cool completely on a wire rack.

5. For glaze: In a small bowl, whisk together all ingredients until smooth; spoon onto bread. Garnish with lavender and blackberries, if desired. Let stand until glaze is set, about 10 minutes. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

Note: *Although you're not likely to find culinary-grade lavender in the spice aisle of a typical grocery store, it's available in specialty food stores such as Trader Joe's and Whole Foods, as well as online. Be sure the package says "culinary-grade" or "food-safe."*





Chocolate-Mint
Cream Pie,
page 63



TARTE SOLEIL

Makes 1 (14-inch) loaf

Named after its shape, tarte soleil (which translates to “sun bread”) is as delicious as it is beautiful. Traditionally enjoyed during apéro, the French term for cocktail hour, the bread’s twisted strands allow it to be easily pulled apart, making it perfect to share with friends.

- 3¼ cups plus 2 tablespoons (422 grams) all-purpose flour, divided
- 1 tablespoon (12 grams) granulated sugar
- 1 (0.25-ounce) package (7 grams) instant yeast*
- 2 teaspoons (6 grams) kosher salt
- 1 cup (240 grams) whole milk
- ¼ cup (57 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- 2 large eggs (100 grams), room temperature and divided
- Roasted Garlic and Herb Butter (recipe follows), room temperature
- 1 tablespoon (15 grams) water
- 2 teaspoons (6 grams) sesame seeds
- 1 tablespoon (14 grams) unsalted butter, melted and warm

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat 1 cup (125 grams) flour, granulated sugar, yeast, and salt at medium-low speed until well combined, stopping to scrape sides of bowl.
2. In a medium saucepan, heat milk and softened butter over medium heat until an instant-read thermometer registers 120°F (49°C) to 130°F (54°C). Add milk mixture to flour mixture; beat at medium speed for 2 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add 1 egg (50 grams); beat at medium-high speed for 2 minutes. With mixer on low speed, gradually add remaining 2¼ cups plus 2 tablespoons (297 grams) flour, beating just until combined and stopping to scrape sides of bowl.
3. Switch to the dough hook attachment. Beat at medium speed until a soft, somewhat sticky dough forms, about 15 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl and dough hook. (Dough should pass the windowpane test but may still stick slightly to sides of bowl; see page 113.)

4. Spray a large bowl with cooking spray. Place dough in bowl, turning to grease top. Cover and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°F/24°C) until doubled in size, 40 minutes to 1 hour.

5. Line a large light-colored rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper.

6. Lightly punch down dough; cover and let stand for 5 minutes. Turn out dough, and divide into 4 portions (about 190 grams each); gently shape each into a ball. Cover with plastic wrap, and let stand for 15 minutes. Keeping other portions covered with plastic wrap, roll and pat 1 portion into an 11-inch circle; gently place on prepared pan. (Dough may shrink slightly.) Spread one-third of Roasted Garlic and Herb Butter (about ¼ cup or 55 grams) onto dough circle, leaving a ½-inch border. Repeat rolling and stacking procedure with 2 dough balls and remaining Roasted Garlic and Herb Butter. Roll remaining dough ball into an 11-inch circle, and place on top of previous layers.

7. Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C).

8. Place a 1½-inch round cutter in center of dough; gently press down just to leave a mark (A). Using a sharp knife or a pizza cutter, make 16 evenly spaced cuts from center mark to edge of dough (B, C).

Grasping 1 cut piece at a time, twist portion to the right 3 to 4 times (D, E, F); pinch ends firmly together to adhere. Repeat with remaining cut portions. Cover and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°F/24°C) until nearly doubled in size, 30 to 45 minutes. Pinch ends together again, if necessary.

9. In a small bowl, whisk together 1 tablespoon (15 grams) water and remaining 1 egg (50 grams); brush onto dough, and sprinkle sesame seeds in center.

10. Bake until golden brown and an instant-read thermometer inserted in center registers at least 190°F (88°C), 18 to 22 minutes, lightly covering with foil to prevent excess browning, if necessary. Let cool on pan for 15 minutes. Just before serving, brush with melted butter. Serve warm.

**We used Red Star® Instant Yeast.*

ROASTED GARLIC AND HERB BUTTER

Makes about ¾ cup

- 1 medium head garlic (65 grams)
- 1 teaspoon (5 grams) olive oil
- 1 teaspoon (2.5 grams) kosher salt, divided

- ½ cup (10 grams) lightly packed fresh parsley leaves
- ¼ cup (6 grams) lightly packed sliced fresh chives
- 2 tablespoons (3 grams) fresh rosemary leaves
- ¾ cup (150 grams) unsalted butter, room temperature
- ¼ teaspoon finely ground black pepper

1. Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C).
2. Cut ¼ inch off top end of garlic, keeping cloves intact. Place garlic, cut side up, on a piece of foil. Drizzle with oil, and sprinkle with ½ teaspoon salt. Wrap in foil.
3. Bake until fragrant and deep golden brown, about 45 minutes. Unwrap garlic, and let cool completely.
4. Squeeze garlic pulp into the work bowl of a food processor; add parsley, chives, and rosemary, and process until almost smooth, 1 to 2 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add butter, pepper, and remaining ¾ teaspoon plus ¼ teaspoon salt (2.5 grams), and process until smooth and creamy, 1 to 2 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Refrigerate in airtight container for up to 3 days.





CHOCOLATE-MINT CREAM PIE

Makes 1 (9-inch) pie

Mint and chocolate flavors aren't just for the holidays! We took the same flavors of our favorite chocolate-mint candies and mint chocolate chip ice cream and turned them into this decadent pie, perfect for cooling you down on a hot summer day.

Crust:

- 1½ cups (170 grams) chocolate sandwich cookie crumbs (see Note)
- 3 tablespoons (36 grams) granulated sugar
- ½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt
- ¼ cup (57 grams) unsalted butter, melted and cooled
- 1 large egg yolk (19 grams)

Filling:

- ¾ cup (180 grams) heavy whipping cream
- 25 fresh mint leaves (about 4 grams)
- 2 (8-ounce) packages (454 grams) cream cheese, room temperature

- 1½ cups (180 grams) confectioners' sugar
- 3 tablespoons (45 grams) sour cream, room temperature
- 1 teaspoon (5 grams) fresh lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt

Chocolate Whipped Cream (recipe follows)

Garnish: grated chocolate, fresh mint

1. Preheat oven to 350°F(180°C). Spray a 9-inch pie pan with baking spray with flour pan.
2. For crust: In a medium bowl, stir together cookie crumbs, granulated sugar, and salt.
3. In a small bowl, whisk together cooled melted butter and egg yolk. Stir butter mixture into crumb mixture until well combined. Press mixture into bottom and up sides of prepared pan.
4. Bake until crust is fragrant, 15 to 20 minutes. Let cool completely.
5. For filling: In a small saucepan, heat cream over medium heat just until bubbles begin to form around sides of pan. (Do not boil.) Remove from heat, and add mint leaves. Let cool completely. Strain mixture through a fine-mesh sieve into the bowl of a stand mixer, discarding solids. Refrigerate until cold, about 2 hours.

6. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat cold mint cream at medium speed until stiff peaks form. Transfer to a medium bowl. Wipe bowl clean.

7. In same bowl of stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat cream cheese and confectioners' sugar at medium speed until smooth and well combined, about 1 minute, stopping to scrape bottom and sides of bowl and paddle. Add sour cream, lemon juice, vanilla, and salt. Beat until just combined, about 30 seconds. Gently fold in whipped mint cream until well combined. Spread mixture into prepared crust. Refrigerate pie until cold, at least 4 hours, or up to overnight.

8. Just before serving, spread Chocolate Whipped Cream onto pie; garnish with chocolate and mint, if desired. Cover and refrigerate for up to 3 days.

Note: We used Oreos for the piecrust. Separate 21 sandwich cookies, and scrape out the cream filling. Crush just the cookies without the filling.

CHOCOLATE WHIPPED CREAM

Makes 2 cups

1 cup (240 grams) cold heavy whipping cream

6 tablespoons (42 grams) confectioners' sugar
2 tablespoons (10 grams) Dutch process cocoa powder
1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract
 $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon kosher salt

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat all ingredients at low speed until combined. Gradually increase mixer speed to high, beating until stiff peaks form. Use immediately.

LEMON AND THYME OLIVE OIL CAKE

Make 1 (8-inch) cake

Pluck a handful of fresh thyme from your garden for this citrusy cake. Both yogurt and oil in the batter give the baked cake a tender crumb that stays moist for several days.

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup (150 grams) granulated sugar
5 teaspoons (5 grams) lemon zest
2 teaspoons chopped fresh thyme
3 large eggs (150 grams), room temperature
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (112 grams) extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for brushing
1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (120 grams) plain Greek yogurt
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups (188 grams) all-purpose flour

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons (7.5 grams) baking powder
 $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon (2.25 grams) kosher salt
Garnish: lemon slices

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Spray an 8-inch square baking pan with baking spray with flour. Line bottom of pan with parchment paper.

2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat sugar, lemon zest, and thyme at low speed until fragrant, 1 to 2 minutes. Add eggs, and beat at medium-high speed until mixture is thick and pale, 5 to 7 minutes. With mixer on medium-low speed, gradually add oil and vanilla, beating until combined. Add yogurt, beating until combined.

3. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, and salt. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to sugar mixture, beating until just combined and stopping to scrape bottom and sides of bowl. Spread batter into prepared pan.

4. Bake until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, 30 to 35 minutes. Let cool in pan for 5 minutes. Remove from pan, and let cool completely on a wire rack. Brush with oil just before serving. Garnish with lemon, if desired. Store in airtight container for up to 3 days. 🍋





Piecrust Linzers,
page 72



5 WAYS *with* piecrust

*Whether single servings or slabs,
bake any and every style of pie with
our tried-and-true All-Butter Piecrust*

PHOTOGRAPHY BY KYLE CARPENTER
RECIPE DEVELOPMENT BY AMANDA STABILE
FOOD STYLING BY AARON CONRAD
STYLING BY MAGGIE HILL

Perfecting Your Piecrust

The key to flakiness in the All-Butter Piecrust is minimal mixing once the butter has been cut in to keep tiny, whole pieces of butter that are evenly dispersed throughout the dough. As the butter in the dough melts in the oven, it gives off water, which turns to steam. The super-heated steam puffs up and separates the layers of dough. Cold ingredients and limited handling create the best crust, so it's important to be methodical when getting your dough ready to bake.

Using a food processor to make piecrust is the most efficient method. It's faster than making it by hand, and it keeps your ingredients colder, which results in a flakier crust. Once mixed, the dough will look crumbly, but it should be moist and hold together—but not be sticky—when squeezed.



Follow these steps to get your crust from dough disk to pie plate quickly and easily

Using a long rolling pin, roll the chilled dough from the center outward using firm (but not hard) and steady pressure. Avoid pressing down on the edges so they don't become too thin. Give the dough a quarter turn, and roll again. Lightly flour underneath the dough as necessary to prevent sticking. If the dough becomes too soft or warm, refrigerate it for 5 to 10 minutes before working again. Repeat rolling and turning until the dough is wide enough to overhang the pie plate by 1 to 2 inches. For a 9-inch pie plate, roll the dough into a 12-inch circle.

To transfer the dough to the pie plate, place the pin about 2 inches from the top of the rolled-out dough. Fold the top edge of the dough over the rolling pin, and turn the pin once to loosely roll the dough around it. Lift the pin, and carefully move it to the middle of the plate and unfold the dough.

Let the dough fall into the plate as you unroll it off the pin. Gently lift the dough around the edges and let it drape all the way down the sides of the plate and into the bottom.

Gently press the dough into place. Avoid stretching the dough, as it will just shrink back during baking. Trim the excess dough to $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 inch past the edge of the plate, fold the edges under, and crimp as desired.



Save those trimmings!

Don't toss your piecrust scraps! Sprinkle dried herbs and cheese or sugar and spices onto scraps and bake until golden brown for a baker's snack. You can also freeze the trimmings in a heavy-duty resealable bag until you've accumulated enough for a full crust.



Strawberry-Plum
Hand Pies
page 72





Egg-and-
Mushroom
Gallettes,
page 71



ALL-BUTTER PIECRUST

Makes 1 crust

- 1½ cups (188 grams) all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt
- ½ cup (113 grams) cold unsalted butter, cut into ½-inch cubes
- ¼ cup (60 grams) ice water, plus more as needed

1. In the work bowl of a food processor, pulse flour and salt until combined. Add cold butter; pulse until mixture is crumbly and butter pieces are pea-size. With processor running, add ¼ cup (60 grams) ice water in a slow, steady stream just

until dough comes together. (Mixture may appear crumbly but should be moist and hold together when pinched.) Add additional ice water, 1 tablespoon (15 grams) at a time, if needed.

2. Turn out dough, and shape into a disk. Wrap tightly in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for at least 1 hour or up to 2 days, or freeze for up to 3 months. Let frozen dough thaw overnight in refrigerator before using. If refrigerating for longer than 1 hour, let dough stand at room temperature for 10 to 15 minutes before rolling out.

EGG-AND-MUSHROOM GAULETTES

Makes 4 galettes

These savory galettes are filled with duxelles, a French term for a paste or finely chopped mixture of mushrooms flavored with alliums and herbs. They make a terrific brunch or light lunch or dinner.

- 8 ounces (226 grams) fresh baby portobello mushrooms, finely chopped
- $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon (2.25 grams) kosher salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon (1 gram) ground black pepper
- 2 teaspoons (10 grams) sherry vinegar
- 1 (8-ounce) package (226 grams) cream cheese, softened
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (57 grams) shredded Emmentaler cheese
- 1 large egg yolk (19 grams)
- All-purpose flour, for dusting
- All-Butter Piecrust (recipe precedes)
- 5 large eggs (250 grams), divided
- 1 tablespoon (15 grams) water
- Garnish: flaked sea salt, finely chopped fresh chives

1. Position oven rack in bottom third of oven. Preheat oven to 425°F (220°C). Line a rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. On prepared pan, toss together mushrooms, kosher salt, and pepper; spread in a single layer.
3. Bake until slightly dried, 10 to 15 minutes. Let cool completely on pan. Drizzle vinegar onto mushrooms, and toss to coat. Leave oven on.
4. In a medium bowl, stir together cream cheese, Emmentaler cheese, and egg yolk until smooth.
5. On a lightly floured surface, divide All-Butter Piecrust into 4 portions (about 90 grams each). Roll each portion into an 8-inch circle. Spread $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (70 grams) cream cheese mixture onto each dough circle, leaving a 2-inch border around edges. Top each with 2 tablespoons (20 grams) mushroom mixture. Fold sides of dough over filling, pleating as desired. Place galettes on a parchment paper-lined baking sheet, and refrigerate until firm, about 20 minutes.
6. In a small bowl, whisk together 1 egg and 1 tablespoon (15 grams) water; brush onto dough.
7. Bake until crust is lightly browned, about 10 minutes. Crack 1 egg into center of each galette. Bake until crust is golden brown and eggs are just set, 8 to 10 minutes more, or to desired degree of doneness. Let cool on pan for 10 minutes. Garnish with sea salt and chives, if desired. Serve warm.

PIECRUST LINZERS

Makes about 10 sandwich cookies

Traditionally, these cookies are made with a shortbread-like dough. We've dressed them up in piecrust and turned them into a flaky, crunchy sugar-topped version.

- All-purpose flour, for dusting
- All-Butter Piecrust (recipe precedes)
- 1 large egg (50 grams), lightly beaten
- 1 tablespoon (15 grams) water
- Sparkling sugar, for sprinkling
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (80 grams) fruit preserves*
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (80 grams) lemon curd*

1. Line baking sheets with parchment paper.
2. On a lightly floured surface, roll All-Butter Piecrust to $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch thickness. Using a 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch round cutter, cut dough. Using a 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch round cutter, cut center from half of dough circles. Prick center of whole circles with a fork. Reroll scraps once, and repeat cutting and pricking. Place all dough pieces on prepared pans. Refrigerate until firm, 15 to 20 minutes.
3. Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C).
4. In a small bowl, whisk together egg and 1 tablespoon (15 grams) water; brush onto dough. Sprinkle with sparkling sugar.
5. Bake until lightly browned, 12 to 15 minutes. Let cool on pans for 10 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks.
6. Spoon about 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons (6 grams) preserves or lemon curd onto whole rounds. Top with cutouts, sugar side up. Best served same day as made. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

**We used Bonne Maman® Apricot Preserves and Lemon Curd.*

STRAWBERRY-PLUM HAND PIES

Makes 12 hand pies

Adding lemon juice to fruit fillings helps balance the sweetness and round out the flavors of the filling.

- 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups (186 grams) chopped fresh plums (about 2 medium plums)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (100 grams) granulated sugar

- 2 teaspoons (10 grams) fresh lemon juice
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 cup (140 grams) quartered fresh strawberries
- 2 tablespoons (16 grams) cornstarch
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon (2 grams) vanilla extract
- All-purpose flour, for dusting
- All-Butter Piecrust (recipe precedes)

1. In a medium saucepan, bring plums, sugar, lemon juice, and salt to a boil over medium heat, stirring frequently; cook, stirring occasionally, until plums begin to soften and release juice, about 5 minutes. Stir in strawberries.
2. Carefully transfer about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (60 grams) juice from pan to a small bowl; whisk in cornstarch until smooth. Stir cornstarch mixture into fruit mixture; cook, stirring frequently, until mixture is thick and translucent, 2 to 3 minutes. Remove from heat, and stir in vanilla. Let cool completely.
3. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
4. On a lightly floured surface, roll All-Butter Piecrust to $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch thickness. Using a 4-inch round cutter, cut dough, rerolling scraps once. Spoon 1 tablespoon (20 grams) cooled fruit mixture into center of each round.
5. In another small bowl, whisk together egg and 1 tablespoon (15 grams) water; brush onto edges of dough. Fold dough in half over filling, pressing edges together to seal. Using a fork, crimp as desired. Place pies on prepared pan. Refrigerate until firm, at least 20 minutes.
6. Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C).
7. Brush egg wash onto dough. Cut a few small slits in dough to let steam escape.
8. Bake until golden brown, about 15 minutes. Let cool on pans for 10 minutes. Serve warm, or let cool completely on wire racks. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

*pro tip

Depending on the ripeness of your fruit, it might take a little more or less time for the filling to cook. Follow the visual indicators of doneness more than a timer.



PEACHES AND CREAM PIE

Makes 1 (9-inch) pie

With its layers of flaky crust, smooth filling, whipped cream, and blushing fruit, you'll have this cool pie on repeat all season long.

All-purpose flour, for dusting

All-Butter Piecrust (recipe on page 71)

6 large egg yolks (112 grams)

¼ cup (32 grams) cornstarch

½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt

2¼ cups (510 grams) puréed peeled fresh peaches (about 2 medium peaches)

¾ cup (150 grams) granulated sugar

6 tablespoons (90 grams) fresh lemon juice

½ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, cubed and softened

1 cup (240 grams) cold heavy whipping cream

½ cup (60 grams) confectioners' sugar

1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract

Garnish: sliced fresh peaches

1. On a lightly floured surface, roll All-Butter Piecrust into a 12-inch circle (about ⅛ inch thick). Gently transfer to a 9-inch pie plate, and trim excess to ½ inch beyond edge of plate. Fold excess under, and crimp as desired. Prick bottom of dough all over with a fork, and freeze until firm, about 15 minutes.

2. Preheat oven to 425°F (220°C).

3. Top dough with a piece of parchment paper, letting ends extend over edges of plate. Add pie weights.

4. Bake until edges are golden brown, about 15 minutes. Carefully remove parchment and weights, and bake until bottom of crust is dry and golden, 5 to 7 minutes more. Let cool completely.

5. In a medium bowl, whisk together egg yolks, cornstarch, and salt.

6. In a medium saucepan, whisk together puréed peaches, granulated sugar, and lemon juice. Whisk in egg yolk mixture. Cook over medium-low heat, whisking constantly, until thickened and an instant-read thermometer registers at least 175°F (80°C), 6 to 8 minutes.

7. Remove from heat, and whisk in butter until melted and well combined. Pour filling into prepared crust. Cover with plastic wrap, pressing wrap directly onto surface of filling to prevent a skin from forming. Refrigerate until thick and cold, at least 2 hours, or up to overnight.

8. Just before serving, in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat cold cream, confectioners' sugar, and vanilla at medium-high speed until medium-stiff peaks form. Spread onto pie; garnish with peach slices, if desired. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

PIMIENTO CHEESE SLAB PIE

Makes 1 (14x9-inch) pie

Take a slice of this cheesy, smoky pie and enjoy it as a savory snack or light lunch.

6 ounces (170 grams) cream cheese, softened

¾ cup (170 grams) mayonnaise

2 teaspoons (4 grams) smoked paprika

½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt

4 ounces (113 grams) smoked Gouda cheese, shredded

4 ounces (113 grams) white Cheddar cheese, shredded

4 ounces (113 grams) provolone cheese*, shredded

⅓ cup (67 grams) finely chopped chipotle peppers in adobo sauce

¼ cup (57 grams) diced pimientos

All-purpose flour, for dusting

2 recipes All-Butter Piecrust (recipe on page 71)

1 large egg (50 grams)

1 tablespoon (15 grams) water

1. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

2. In a medium bowl, stir together cream cheese, mayonnaise, paprika, and salt until smooth; stir in shredded cheeses, chipotle pepper, and pimientos until well combined.

3. On a lightly floured surface, roll each portion of All-Butter Piecrust into a 14x9-inch rectangle. Place 1 portion on prepared pan.

4. Spread cheese mixture onto dough on pan, leaving a 1-inch border on all sides. In a small bowl, whisk together egg and 1 tablespoon (15 grams) water; brush onto borders of dough. Top with remaining dough. Trim ¼ inch off all sides of dough; crimp edges with a fork to seal. Refrigerate until firm, 20 to 30 minutes.

5. Preheat oven to 425°F (220°C).

6. Brush egg wash onto dough. Cut a few small slits in dough to let steam escape.

7. Bake for 10 minutes. Reduce oven temperature to 400°F (200°C), and bake until golden brown, about 20 minutes more. Let cool on pan for 15 minutes. Serve warm, or let cool completely on a wire rack. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 3 days. 

**We used BelGioioso® Mild Provolone Cheese.*



A close-up photograph of a person's hands holding a small metal sieve, sifting a fine white powder (likely icing sugar) over a round cake. The cake is decorated with a swirl of white icing and sits on a light-colored surface. The background is a soft-focus kitchen setting with a wooden wall and a dark green curtain.

*Benamina Ebuehi,
an alum of The Great
British Bake Off, gives
us a glimpse inside
her new cookbook,
I'll Bring Dessert, and
wants to inspire you to
be fearless in the kitchen*

A round cake with a swirl of white icing, sitting on a light-colored surface. The cake is decorated with a swirl of white icing and sits on a light-colored surface. The background is a soft-focus kitchen setting with a wooden wall and a dark green curtain.

ENDING ON A
Sweet Note

BY AMBER WILSON / PHOTOGRAPHY BY LAURA EDWARDS

At the opening of her third cookbook, *I'll Bring Dessert*, Benjamina Ebuehi says, "Dessert is the best part of the meal. It lets you linger that little bit longer. It's the joy of bringing a dish to the table and watching everyone's eyes light up." Flipping through the cookbook, I can almost hear the deep, uninhibited conversations flow in the background—the pure anticipation and excitement in the air as a dish of warm apple crumble floats onto the center of the table, spoons gliding across plates, ensuring no bite is left behind. Comfort and coziness course through these pages, casting a warm, honeyed glow on classic dishes elevated with wondrous flavor combinations, like saffron-and-pear galettes, apricot-and-chamomile tarts, and sage-and-white chocolate madeleines. Each recipe captures Benjamina's joy, thoughtfulness, and courage to embrace bold ideas and pairings in a unique, unexpected way. Every alluring dessert began as a wild idea jotted down in a notebook, leaving her ruminating about whether this or that flavor would pair well together in a pie, cookie, cake, or tart. This same culinary curiosity inspired her love of baking.

Benjamina did not follow a traditional path to becoming a baker. As a child growing up in South London, England, she didn't learn to bake at her mother's apron strings or in culinary school, but food has always been part of her identity. At a young age, she constantly found her way into the kitchen, asking question after question as she watched her mom and grandmother cook savory dishes. As she got older, she was fascinated by all things sweet but found a way to embrace savory flavors, especially herbs like sage, rosemary, and tarragon, in her creations. Benjamina became absorbed in the magic of the alchemy of baking: mixing ingredients with her hands, working butter and flour together to a familiar consistency, composing a symphony of flavors, seeing what works and what doesn't.



While studying economics at the University of Leicester, Benjamina spent her free time baking on the weekends and nestling in to watch her favorite show, *The Great British Bake Off*. Savoring episode after episode, she thought, "I could make that," as she watched contestants whip up their signature biscotti and chocolate tarts. She secretly applied to be on the show. After the audition process, Benjamina became a contestant in the seventh season and finished as a quarterfinalist in 2016.

"I think most home bakers get told by family and friends, 'Oh, this is delicious.' You accept it, but you think, 'They're my family. Of course they're going to say it's good.' But having feedback from professionals was validating," she says,





continuing, “A lot of joy grew after that—seeing people enjoy what you’ve made and telling you how much they love your recipes. That fuels a lot of what I do.”

After appearing on the show, she began developing her debut cookbook, *A New Way to Cake*, published in 2019. Although the experience came with challenges, it was also completely fulfilling. Immediately, she began working on her second cookbook, *A Good Day to Bake*, which was published in 2022. The initial ideas bubbling away and seeing her creations photographed with her team—these bookends—are always the most satisfying. Despite it being an intense process, Benjamina does all the food styling for her books. “I love being completely involved in all stages.”

Her latest cookbook, *I’ll Bring Dessert*, is dedicated to that magical moment at the end of a meal. “I thought it would be quite special having things that were easy, not too technical, but still quite homey and a little bit different.” The perfect example is her gorgeous, welcoming cherry slab pie. “You can make a slab pie in a nice big tin. You can have it warm or at room temperature with ice cream or cream. I like a slab

pie because you do get a lot of crust. Everyone gets an edge piece, which is the best part! I also feel like I can’t go wrong with the tiramisù. It’s just an absolute classic.” But when Benjamina is alone in her kitchen, she craves the pleasure of a buttery, simple slice of cake. The perfectly dense, one-bowl loaf cake called the Everyday Cake from her second cookbook is her go-to for such an occasion.

Sharing happiness through her recipes is a constant motivator, and her most valuable advice is to be fearless when pursuing what you want in life. “Don’t be afraid to get stuff wrong or fail privately and publicly. In the age we’re in, it looks like everyone else has got it together and knows what they’re doing,” declares Benjamina. “Not fearing looking a bit silly or looking like you’ve got things wrong or just not getting it right all the time, it’s very freeing.”

With the power to bring people together not only through the irresistible allure of her food but also through her inviting personality and sweet sincerity, each turn of the page of her latest book will inspire you to try something new and have the confidence to say, “I’ll bring dessert.”



***make ahead**

Make the lemon filling up to 2 days ahead and store in an airtight container in the fridge. If you're really pressed for time, you can use a premade pastry shell.

LEMON TART WITH BASIL CREAM

Serves 12

A lemon tart is a beautifully delicate dessert. It's not too in-your-face but can certainly hold its own. A good lemon tart should have a well-pronounced lemon flavour but it shouldn't be so tart that it makes you wince (as did my first few attempts of this tart). The silky, buttery filling is zingy and fresh and would be perfect for a springtime evening dessert. A lightly infused basil cream brings some fragrance and playfulness that keeps people going back in for a second or third slice. For a bit of extra frill, I like to blitz some leftover basil leaves in a food processor with caster sugar, and sprinkle it on top.

For the filling

Grated zest of 3 lemons and
175 milliliters (6 ounces/ $\frac{3}{4}$ cup)
lemon juice
220 grams (7 $\frac{3}{4}$ ounces/generous 1 cup)
caster (superfine) sugar
3 eggs, plus 2 egg yolks
250 grams (9 ounces/1 cup plus
2 tablespoons) unsalted butter, very
soft

For the basil cream

200 grams (8 ounces/scant 1 cup) double
(heavy) cream
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoon icing (confectioners')
sugar
6 basil leaves

For the pastry

200 grams (7 ounces/ $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups) plain
(all-purpose) flour, plus extra for
dusting

110 grams (3 $\frac{3}{4}$ ounces/scant $\frac{1}{2}$ cup) cold
unsalted butter, diced
40 grams (1 $\frac{1}{2}$ ounces/ $\frac{1}{4}$ cup) icing (confectioners') sugar
pinch of fine sea salt
2 egg yolks

1. The filling will need plenty of time to chill, so make this first. Add the lemon zest and juice, the sugar, whole eggs and extra yolks to a heatproof bowl and give it a quick mix to combine. Place the bowl over a pan of simmering water and cook, stirring until it thickens enough to coat the back of a spoon. This can take up to 10–12 minutes, so be patient! If you're using a cooking thermometer, it will be done at about 77°C (170°F).

2. Let cool for 15 minutes before pouring it through a sieve (strainer) and into a blender. With the blender running, add chunks of the softened butter a little at a

time, letting it incorporate before adding more.

3. Once all the butter has been added, pour the mixture into a bowl or container and cover with plastic wrap touching the surface. Chill in the fridge for 6 hours or overnight until it's well chilled and thickened.

4. To make the basil whip, add the cream, icing sugar and basil to a pan and heat gently until hot but not boiling. Remove from the heat, cover and let the basil infuse for at least 30 minutes. Remove the basil leaves and put the cream in the fridge until well chilled.

5. To make the pastry, add the flour, butter, icing sugar and salt to a food processor. Blitz until the mixture resembles fine breadcrumbs. Add in the yolks and pulse again until the mixture starts to clump together. Add a tablespoon of water if it still looks really dry.

6. Turn the mixture out onto a lightly floured surface and use your hands to bring it together. Pat it into a thick disc, wrap in plastic wrap and chill in the fridge for 2–3 hours or until firm.

7. Once chilled, roll out the pastry about 3–4mm ($\frac{1}{8}$ inch) thick. Roll it into a 23-cm (9-inch) tart pan, making sure the pastry is pressed into all the crevices and there's a little overhang of pastry. Chill in the fridge for 30 minutes or in the freezer for 15 minutes.

8. Preheat the oven to 190°C (170°C fan/ 375°F/gas mark 5).

9. Use a fork to dock the base of the pastry and then line it with a sheet of baking paper. Fill with baking beans or uncooked rice and bake for 15–18 minutes until the edges have started to brown. Carefully remove the baking paper and beans and put the tart back in the oven for 10–12 minutes until the base looks dry and lightly browned.

10. Let it cool for a few minutes before using a sharp knife to trim off the excess pastry. Fill the tart shell with the lemon filling mixture, smoothing the top with a palette knife. Place it back in the fridge for 30–60 minutes to set again. To serve, lightly whip the chilled basil cream to get soft peaks, and dollop on the tart. Top with basil sugar (see introduction), if using.

*Recipes excerpted with permission from
I'll Bring Dessert by Benamina Ebuehi
published by Quadrille, April 2024.*





***make ahead**

The sponge can be made 2 days ahead, and the cherries 5 days ahead, and stored in the fridge. The finished cake needs to be stored in the fridge due to the fresh cream.

CHOCOLATE, CHERRY & AMARETTO CREAM CAKE

Serves 10–12

This is a bit of a riff on the classic Black Forest gâteau. And classics are classics for a reason. Chocolate and cherries will always be great friends, and pour in some sweet Amaretto, add a feather-light sponge and lots of fresh cream and you've got yourself a winner. This can easily be dressed up with candles or even sparklers to be a proper celebration cake. A good one to bring along when you want to impress.

85 grams (3 ounces/ $\frac{2}{3}$ cup) plain (all-purpose) flour
30 grams (1 ounce/ $\frac{1}{4}$ tablespoons) unsweetened cocoa powder
 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon fine sea salt
4 eggs
100 grams (3½ ounces/ $\frac{1}{2}$ cup) caster (superfine) sugar
chocolate shavings, to finish
handful of crushed amaretti biscuits, to finish

For the cherries

350 grams (12 ounces) pitted cherries, fresh or frozen, plus extra to decorate
40 grams (1½ ounces/ $\frac{3}{4}$ tablespoons) caster (superfine) sugar
1 star anise
juice of $\frac{1}{2}$ lemon
100 milliliters (3½ ounces/scant $\frac{1}{2}$ cup) Amaretto

For the chocolate frosting

170 grams (6 ounces) dark chocolate
85 grams (3 ounces/ $\frac{1}{3}$ cup plus 2 teaspoons) unsalted butter
100 grams (3½ ounces/ $\frac{1}{2}$ cup) light brown sugar
100 milliliters (3½ ounces/scant $\frac{1}{2}$ cup) hot water
25 grams (1 ounce/ $\frac{3}{4}$ tablespoons) unsweetened cocoa powder
pinch of fine sea salt

For the cream

250 milliliters (9 ounces/generous 1 cup) double (heavy) cream
60 grams (2 ounces/ $\frac{1}{4}$ cup) sour cream
1 teaspoon vanilla bean paste
1 tablespoon icing (confectioners') sugar

1. Preheat the oven to 190°C (170°C fan/375°F/gas mark 5).
2. Line a 30x20-cm (12x8-inch) Swiss roll (jelly roll) pan with baking paper. To make the cake, sift the flour, cocoa powder and salt together and set aside.
3. Add the eggs and sugar to the bowl of a stand mixer and whisk on high speed for 4–5 minutes until the eggs are really thick and pale and doubled in size. You want the eggs to get to ribbon stage—when you lift the whisk attachment, the eggs should leave a trail on the surface before disappearing.
4. Sift the flour onto the eggs in two batches, being very gentle to fold it in after each addition. Pockets of flour like to hide at the bottom, so make sure it's fully combined without knocking out too much air.
5. Pour the batter into the prepared pan and bake for 20–25 minutes until the surface looks dry and puffy. Remove from the oven and set aside to cool completely.
6. Add all the ingredients for the cherries except the Amaretto to a small pan and bring to the boil. Let it simmer for

- 5–6 minutes until the cherries look syrupy. Remove from the heat, stir in the Amaretto and set aside to cool.
7. To make the frosting, add all the ingredients to a clean pan and heat gently until melted, stirring occasionally. Pour it into a bowl and let it cool for a few hours until it thickens to a spreadable consistency. You can speed this up by placing it in the fridge and stirring every so often.
8. Make the cream by adding the cream, sour cream, vanilla and icing sugar to a bowl and whipping until you have stiff peaks.
9. When you're ready to assemble, slice the cake in half lengthways and place it straight on the plate or board you'll serve it on. Spoon the syrup from the cherries onto each cake, letting it completely soak into the sponge. Fold half of the cherries into the cream before spooning it onto the base cake and top with the remaining cherries.
10. Place the second cake on top, then spoon and spread the frosting over the top and sides. Top with chocolate shavings, extra cherries and crushed amaretti biscuits. 

➔ Find Benjamina on Instagram at @bakedbybenji and on her website, benjaminaebuehi.com; Benjamina's latest cookbook, *I'll Bring Dessert*, is available now.





PHOTOGRAPHY BY KYLE CARPENTER
RECIPE DEVELOPMENT BY AMANDA STABILE
FOOD STYLING BY KATIE MOON DICKERSON
STYLING BY MAGGIE HILL



FARMERS' MARKET *Bakes*

This time of year, the stalls and stands of your local markets are overflowing with the finest and freshest fruits and veggies. Let this crop of recipes inspire you to bake your way through nature's bounty.

Blackberries

BLACKBERRY-ALMOND SNACK CAKE

Makes 1 (9-inch) cake

Topped with almonds for a delicate crunch, this cake is ideal for an afternoon snack. Low-protein cake flour creates a soft, fluffy crumb structure, but by adding in a bit of all-purpose flour, it results in an ideal texture of tender yet sturdy cake.

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (170 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- $1\frac{3}{4}$ cups (350 grams) plus 2 tablespoons (24 grams) granulated sugar, divided
- 3 large eggs (150 grams), room temperature

**pro tip*

Bake it your own by using any fresh berry or mix of berries and any nut you like.

- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon (2 grams) vanilla extract
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon (1 gram) almond extract
- 2 cups (250 grams) cake flour*
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (63 grams) all-purpose flour
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons (7.5 grams) baking powder
- 1 teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon (1.25 grams) baking soda
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (120 grams) whole milk, room temperature
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (120 grams) sour cream, room temperature
- 12 ounces (340 grams) fresh blackberries
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (28 grams) sliced almonds

1. Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C). Spray a 9-inch square baking pan with baking spray with flour. Line pan with parchment paper, letting excess extend over sides of pan.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and $1\frac{3}{4}$ cups (350 grams) granulated sugar at medium speed until fluffy, about 3 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in extracts.
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together flours, baking powder, salt, and baking soda. In a small bowl, whisk together milk and sour cream. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture alternately with milk mixture, beginning and ending with flour mixture, beating just until combined after each addition. Carefully fold in 8 ounces (227 grams) blackberries. Spread batter into prepared pan.
4. Tap pan on a kitchen towel-lined counter several times to spread batter and release any air bubbles. Top batter with remaining 4 ounces (113 grams) blackberries. Sprinkle with remaining 2 tablespoons (24 grams) sugar; sprinkle with almonds.
5. Bake for 15 minutes. Reduce oven temperature to 350°F (180°C), and bake until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out with a few moist crumbs, 30 to 40 minutes more. Let cool in pan for 10 minutes. Using excess parchment as handles, remove from pan, and let cool completely on a wire rack. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

**We used King Arthur Unbleached Cake Flour.*





Corn & Berries

BERRY-AND-SWEET CORN SHORTCAKES

Makes 12 shortcakes

These corn shortcakes pair well with any berry or stone fruit you find at your market! To get your heavy cream to whip the fastest and tallest, use not only cold cream but also a cold bowl and whisk. Pop them in the freezer for about 10 minutes before you begin.

Shortcakes:

- 3¼ cups (406 grams) all-purpose flour
- 1 cup (150 grams) plain yellow cornmeal
- ¼ cup (50 grams) plus 2 tablespoons (24 grams) granulated sugar, divided
- 1 tablespoon (15 grams) baking powder
- 1 teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt
- ¾ cup (170 grams) cold unsalted butter, cubed
- ¾ cup (120 grams) fresh sweet corn kernels
- 1½ cups (360 grams) cold whole buttermilk
- 1 large egg (50 grams)
- 1 tablespoon (15 grams) water

Berries:

- 3 cups assorted fresh berries
- ¼ cup (50 grams) granulated sugar

Whipped cream:

- 1½ cups (360 grams) cold heavy whipping cream
- 3 tablespoons (63 grams) honey
- ½ teaspoon (2 grams) vanilla extract

1. Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C). Line rimmed baking sheets with parchment paper.
2. For shortcakes: In a large bowl, whisk together flour, cornmeal, ¼ cup (50 grams) sugar, baking powder, and salt. Using a pastry blender or your hands, cut in cold butter until mixture is crumbly and resembles coarse meal. Stir in corn. Make a well in center, and gradually add cold buttermilk, stirring just until dry ingredients are moistened.

3. Turn out dough, and gently knead 4 to 5 times just until dough is fully combined. Pat dough to 1-inch thickness. Using a 2½-inch round cutter, cut 12 circles, without twisting cutter, gently rerolling scraps as necessary. Place 2 inches apart on prepared pans.
4. In a small bowl, whisk together egg and 1 tablespoon (15 grams) water; lightly brush onto dough. Sprinkle remaining 2 tablespoons (24 grams) sugar onto dough.
5. Bake until golden brown, 15 to 17 minutes. Let cool on pans for 10 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on a wire rack.
6. For berries: In a medium bowl, stir together berries and sugar. Cover and let stand, stirring occasionally, for 30 minutes to 1 hour, or refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 2 days.
7. For whipped cream: In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat cold cream, honey, and vanilla at medium-high speed until medium-stiff peaks form, 3 to 4 minutes.
8. Halve shortcakes; top with whipped cream, berry mixture, and top half of shortcakes. Serve immediately.





Zucchini

*pro tip

Use the large holes of a box grater or the shredding disc of your food processor to shred the zucchini. Do not drain or squeeze the zucchini dry before adding to batter.

ZUCCHINI-CHOCOLATE CHIP CAKE WITH WHIPPED CREAM CHEESE FROSTING

Makes 1 (9-inch) cake

We elevated this easy, stir-together cake with a fluffy whipped frosting.

- 2¼ cups (281 grams) all-purpose flour
 - 1 teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt
 - ¾ teaspoon (3.75 grams) baking soda
 - ½ teaspoon (1 gram) ground cinnamon
 - ¼ teaspoon (1.25 grams) baking powder
 - 1¼ cups (250 grams) granulated sugar
 - ½ cup (112 grams) neutral oil
 - ¼ cup (55 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar
 - 2 large eggs (100 grams), room temperature
 - 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract
 - 2 cups (319 grams) shredded unpeeled zucchini (about 2 large zucchini)
 - ¾ cup (128 grams) semisweet chocolate chips
- Whipped Cream Cheese Frosting (recipe follows)

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Spray a 9-inch round cake pan with baking spray with flour. Line bottom of pan with parchment paper.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, salt, baking soda, cinnamon, and baking powder.
3. In a large bowl, whisk together granulated sugar, oil, brown sugar, eggs, and vanilla until well combined; whisk in zucchini. Gradually stir in flour mixture just until dry ingredients are moistened. Stir in chocolate until mixture is well combined. Spread batter into prepared pan. Tap pan on a kitchen towel-lined counter a few times to spread batter.
4. Bake until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, 50 minutes to 1 hour. Let cool in pan for 10 minutes. Remove from pan, and let cool completely on a wire rack.
5. Spread Whipped Cream Cheese Frosting onto cooled cake. Cover and refrigerate for up to 3 days.

WHIPPED CREAM CHEESE FROSTING

Makes 2 cups

- 4 ounces (113 grams) cream cheese, softened
- ½ cup (60 grams) confectioners' sugar
- ½ teaspoon (2 grams) vanilla extract
- 1 cup (240 grams) cold heavy whipping cream

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat cream cheese at medium speed until smooth. Add confectioners' sugar and vanilla, beating until combined; scrape bottom and sides of bowl and whisk. With mixer on medium-high speed, slowly add cold cream, beating until stiff peaks form, stopping to scrape bottom and sides of bowl. Use immediately.





PEACH STREUSEL BARS

Makes 9 bars

Peaches

Fresh lemon juice, warm cardamom, and rich vanilla enhance the sweet flavors of fragrant, ripe fresh peaches. Apricots, nectarines, and plums all work well, too!

- 3 cups (375 grams) all-purpose flour
- $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon (3.75 grams) baking powder
- 1 cup (227 grams) plus 3 tablespoons (42 grams) unsalted butter, divided
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups (333 grams) granulated sugar*, divided
- 2 teaspoons (6 grams) kosher salt, divided
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons (6 grams) vanilla extract, divided
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (32 grams) cornstarch
- $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon (1.5 grams) ground cardamom
- 5 cups (800 grams) $\frac{1}{4}$ - to $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch-chopped fresh peaches (6 to 7 medium peaches), divided
- 2 tablespoons (30 grams) fresh lemon juice

1. Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C). Line a 9-inch square baking pan with heavy-duty foil, letting excess extend over sides of pan. Lightly spray foil with cooking spray.
2. In a large bowl, whisk together flour and baking powder.
3. In a medium microwave-safe bowl, heat 1 cup (227 grams) butter on high in 10-second intervals, stirring between each, until melted; whisk in 1 cup (200 grams) granulated sugar, $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons (4.5 grams) salt, and 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla. Stir butter mixture into flour mixture until combined. Reserve $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (217 grams) dough in a small bowl; crumble. Press remaining dough into bottom of prepared pan.
4. Bake until edges are lightly browned, 10 to 12 minutes. Let cool slightly in pan on a wire rack. Leave oven on.
5. Meanwhile, in a medium saucepan, whisk together cornstarch, cardamom, remaining $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (133 grams) sugar, and remaining $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon (1.5 grams) salt. Stir in 3 cups (480 grams) peaches, lemon juice, and remaining 3 tablespoons (42 grams) butter until well combined. Cook over medium heat, stirring frequently, until bubbles begin to form and liquid is thickened, 5 to 6 minutes.
6. Remove from heat; stir in remaining 2 cups (320 grams) peaches and remaining $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon (2 grams) vanilla. Spread peach mixture evenly onto prepared crust, pressing thickened liquid between peach pieces. Sprinkle reserved dough onto peaches.
7. Bake until top is golden brown and filling is bubbly, about 25 minutes, loosely covering with foil to prevent excess browning, if necessary. Let cool completely in pan on a wire rack.
8. Using excess foil as handles, remove from pan, and cut into bars. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days. 

*We used C&H® Granulated Sugar.

*pro tip

We like leaving the peel on the peaches to see the fruit's rosy blush, but feel free to peel them if you prefer. Visit bakefromscratch.com/from-the-pantry/peaches for our quick and easy peeling method.

THE SWEET



TASTE OF VICTORY

*In recognition of the 2024
Summer Olympic Games
that run from July 26
through August 11 in
Paris, we present to you
these winning pastries*

PHOTOGRAPHY BY KYLE CARPENTER / REC.PE DEVELOPMENT BY OLA AGBODZA
FOOD STYLING BY KATIE MOON DICKERSON / STYLING BY SIDNEY BRAGIEL





OLYMPIC MEDAL ARLETTES

Makes about 24 cookies

We transformed the timeless French palmier into the elegant arlette, a shape reminiscent of a champion's medal. While arlettes usually feature cinnamon, which tends to darken their hue, we embraced the beloved palmier profile, ensuring each bite is a celebration of caramelized sugar and irresistible crunchiness.

All-purpose flour, for dusting

Rough Puff Pastry Dough (recipe follows)

6 tablespoons (72 grams) granulated sugar

Confectioners' sugar, for dusting

Flaked sea salt, for sprinkling

4 ounces (113 grams) white chocolate, chopped and melted (optional)

Gold, silver, and bronze edible luster dust (optional)

1. On a lightly floured surface, roll Rough Puff Pastry Dough into a 12-inch square. Sprinkle with 3 tablespoons (36 grams) granulated sugar. Using a rolling pin, gently press sugar into dough. Carefully turn dough sugar side down. Sprinkle with remaining 3 tablespoons (36 grams) sugar; using a rolling pin, gently press sugar into dough. Starting on one side, roll up dough into a log. Freeze until firm enough to slice, about 15 minutes.
2. Line baking sheets with parchment paper. Lightly dust work surface with confectioners' sugar.
3. Using a serrated knife, cut dough log into ½-inch-thick slices. On prepared surface, working with one slice at a time, gently roll slices to about ⅓ inch thick and 3 inches wide. (If dough is sticking to rolling pin, lightly dust top with confectioners' sugar.) Place slices 2 inches apart on prepared pans. Freeze until firm, 10 to 15 minutes.
4. Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C).
5. Lightly sprinkle arlettes with sea salt.
6. Bake, one pan at a time, until bottoms are golden brown, about 8 minutes. Working quickly, gently turn each arlette, maintaining its shape. Bake until puffed and sugar is caramelized, 8 to 10 minutes

more. Let cool on pans for 5 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks.

7. For optional white chocolate and luster dust decoration: Using a 1-inch-wide brush, brush melted chocolate onto cookie as desired. Let stand until dry. Using a small dry brush, lightly brush luster dust onto chocolate. Store in an airtight container for up to 2 days.

ROUGH PUFF PASTRY DOUGH

Makes about 24 cookies or 12 pastries

1½ cups (300 grams) cold unsalted butter, cubed

2¼ cups (281 grams) all-purpose flour, plus more for dusting

2 teaspoons (6 grams) kosher salt

½ cup (120 grams) ice water

1. Freeze cold butter until firm, 15 to 20 minutes.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat cold butter, flour, and salt at low speed just until butter is coated with flour. With mixer on low speed, add ½ cup (120 grams) ice water in a slow, steady stream, beating just until dough comes together, about 1 minute, stopping to scrape bottom and sides of bowl and turn dough to hydrate evenly. (There will still be large pieces of butter; it's OK if a few dry bits remain.)
3. Turn out dough onto a lightly floured surface, and roll into a 7-inch square. Wrap in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for 45 minutes to 1 hour.
4. On a lightly floured surface, roll dough into an 18x10-inch rectangle, lightly flouring surface and top of dough as needed. Fold dough in thirds like a letter. Rotate dough 90 degrees; roll into an 18x10-inch rectangle, and fold in thirds like a letter. Repeat procedure for a third and final turn. (If, at any point, the butter is too soft after a fold, wrap in plastic wrap and freeze until butter is firm again, checking every 5 minutes.) Wrap dough in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for at least 1 hour or up to 8 hours.



OLYMPIC RING MERINGUE NESTS

Makes about 8 meringues

Savor the elegance of these crisp, delicate meringue nests, also known as vacherins. Each nest is filled with airy diplomat cream (crème diplomat in French), a delightful blend of pastry cream (crème pâtissière) and unsweetened whipped cream. This captivating dessert offers a visually stunning presentation, as each filled nest is crowned with fresh fruit in the same colors of the Olympic rings.

Meringue:

- 4 large egg whites (120 grams), room temperature
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon cream of tartar
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (150 grams) granulated sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon (2 grams) vanilla extract

Filling:

- $1\frac{1}{4}$ cups (300 grams) whole milk
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (50 grams) plus 2 tablespoons (24 grams) granulated sugar, divided
- $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon kosher salt
- 3 large egg yolks (56 grams), room temperature
- 2 tablespoons plus 1 teaspoon (19 grams) cornstarch
- 1 tablespoon (14 grams) unsalted butter, cubed
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract
- 1 cup (240 grams) cold heavy whipping cream

Assorted fresh fruit, to serve

1. Preheat oven to 200°F (93°C). Using a permanent marker, draw 5 (4-inch) circles 2 inches apart onto 2 sheets of parchment paper. Place parchment, marker side down, on 2 rimmed baking sheets.
2. For meringue: In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat egg whites and cream of tartar at medium speed until foamy. Increase mixer speed to high, and add sugar, 1 tablespoon (12 grams) at a time, beating

until stiff, glossy peaks form, 5 to 7 minutes. Beat in vanilla.

3. Spoon meringue into a pastry bag fitted with a medium open star piping tip. Following template on parchment, pipe meringue into spirals to form solid circles. Pipe 1 or 2 rings of meringue around edges of circles to create nests.

4. Bake until set and dry, about 2 hours. Turn oven off, and let meringues stand in oven with door closed overnight.

5. For filling: In a medium saucepan, heat milk, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (50 grams) sugar, and salt over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until sugar and salt dissolve and mixture is steaming. (Do not boil.)

6. In a medium bowl, whisk together egg yolks, cornstarch, and remaining 2 tablespoons (24 grams) sugar. Gradually add hot milk mixture to egg yolk mixture, whisking constantly. Return mixture to saucepan, and bring to a boil over medium-low heat, whisking constantly. Cook, whisking constantly, until thickened and bubbly, 2 to 3 minutes.

7. Remove from heat, and strain through a fine-mesh sieve into a medium heatproof bowl. Stir in butter and vanilla until butter is melted and mixture is smooth. Cover with plastic wrap, pressing wrap directly onto surface of pastry

cream to prevent a skin from forming. Refrigerate until thick and cold, at least 4 hours, or up to overnight.

8. In a large bowl, whisk cold cream until stiff peaks form.

9. Whisk cold pastry cream until smooth. Fold in whipped cream in three additions. Spoon filling into meringue nests. Top each with fruit as desired. Serve immediately.

GOLD MEDAL APRICOT BRIOCHE TARTS

Makes 18 tarts

Apricot tarts, known as oreillettes des l'abricots in French, traditionally feature puff pastry filled with crème pâtissière. However, our twist on the classic substitutes puff pastry with brioche dough and replaces crème pâtissière with frangipane, presenting a novel approach to the classic French pastry. The term "oreillette" translates to "tab" or "flap," which precisely describes the method to fold the pastry.

Dough:

- ½ cup (120 grams) warm whole milk (110°F/43°C to 115°F/46°C)
- ¾ teaspoons (10 grams) active dry yeast*
- 3 tablespoons (36 grams) plus ¼ teaspoon (1 gram) granulated sugar, divided

- ¾ cups (406 grams) all-purpose flour, plus more for dusting
- 2 tablespoons (6 grams) lemon zest
- 2 teaspoons (6 grams) kosher salt
- 4 large eggs (200 grams), room temperature
- ¾ cup plus 2 tablespoons (198 grams) unsalted butter, room temperature

Filling:

- ½ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, room temperature
- ½ cup (100 grams) granulated sugar
- 2 large egg yolks (37 grams), room temperature
- 2 teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla extract
- 1½ teaspoons (6 grams) almond extract
- 1 cup (96 grams) superfine blanched almond flour
- ¼ cup (31 grams) all-purpose flour
- ½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt
- 1 large egg (50 grams), room temperature and beaten

- 18 medium fresh apricots (about 630 grams), peeled, halved, and pitted, or 2 (15-ounce) cans (850 grams) apricot halves, drained and patted dry
- ½ cup (56 grams) sliced almonds
- ½ cup (160 grams) apricot preserves*, warmed

1. For dough: In a small bowl, stir together warm milk, yeast, and ¼ teaspoon (1 gram) sugar. Let stand until foamy, about 10 minutes.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, combine all-purpose flour, lemon zest, salt, and remaining 3 tablespoons (36 grams) sugar. Add yeast mixture and eggs, and beat at low speed until a shaggy dough forms; scrape sides of bowl.
3. Switch to the dough hook attachment. With mixer on low speed, add butter, 1 tablespoon (14 grams) at a time, beating until combined after each addition.



Increase mixer speed to medium-low, and beat until dough is soft and elastic and does not stick to your hands when touched, 10 to 15 minutes.

4. Spray a large bowl with cooking spray. Place dough in bowl, turning to grease top. Cover and refrigerate overnight.

5. For filling: In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and sugar at medium speed until light and creamy, 2 to 3 minutes. Add egg yolks, one at a time, beating well after each addition and stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Beat in extracts.

6. In a small bowl, whisk together almond flour, all-purpose flour, and salt. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating until combined.

7. Line 3 baking sheets with parchment paper.

8. Lightly punch down dough. Very lightly dust work surface with all-purpose flour; turn out dough onto prepared surface,

and divide in half. Roll half of dough into a 13-inch square. (Wrap remaining dough in plastic wrap, and refrigerate.) Trim ½ inch off all sides to create a 12-inch square; cut dough into 9 (4-inch) squares. Place dough pieces on prepared pan. Repeat procedure with remaining dough.

9. Place 1 dough square so that one point is facing you. Using a pastry brush, brush edges of dough with beaten egg. Using a small offset spatula, spread 1 heaping tablespoon (15 grams) filling down center of dough (about 2 inches long). Place 2 apricot halves, cut side down, on filling. Pull and fold side points of dough to center of pastry; gently pinch dough points together and fold under, gently pressing to adhere. Return to pan. Repeat procedure with remaining dough pieces, remaining filling, and remaining apricot halves, placing 2 inches apart on pans. Cover with lightly greased plastic wrap, and let rise in a warm, draft-free

place (75°F/24°C) until doubled in size, 45 minutes to 1 hour. (See Note.)

10. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).

11. Gently brush pastry with beaten egg; top with sliced almonds.

12. Bake, one pan at a time, until golden brown, about 20 minutes, rotating pan halfway through baking. Let cool on pans for 15 minutes. Brush warm preserves onto warm pastries. Serve warm, or let cool completely. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 3 days. Best served same day as baked.

**We used Red Star® Active Dry Yeast and Bonne Maman® Apricot Preserves.*

Note: Some of the tucking procedure will come undone during proofing. Use wooden picks to hold in place as needed while baking, rearranging as needed.





FRENCH FLAG MILLE-FEUILLES

Makes 12 pastries

Mille-feuille is a classic French pastry that translates to “a thousand sheets.” It’s a traditional French dessert composed of three layers of puff pastry, which we filled with luscious crème mousseline and adorned with sweetened whipped cream and berries to reflect the colors of the French flag. By using quick rough puff pastry and baking the dough between two baking sheets, we achieve the perfect flatness required to assemble those iconic layers to get you to your finish line in record-breaking time.

Filling:

- 1½ cups (360 grams) whole milk
- 1 cup (200 grams) granulated sugar, divided
- 4 large egg yolks (74 grams)
- ¼ cup plus 1½ tablespoons (44 grams) cornstarch
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt
- ½ cup (113 grams) plus 2 tablespoons (28 grams) unsalted butter, room temperature and divided
- 1½ teaspoons (9 grams) vanilla bean paste or (6 grams) vanilla extract

All-purpose flour, for dusting

Rough Puff Pastry Dough (recipe on page 96)

Topping:

- 1 cup (240 grams) cold heavy whipping cream
- 1 tablespoon (12 grams) granulated sugar
- ¼ teaspoon (1.5 grams) vanilla bean paste or (1 gram) vanilla extract

Fresh blueberries and fresh strawberries, to serve

1. For filling: In a large saucepan, heat milk and ¾ cup (150 grams) sugar over medium heat, whisking frequently, until sugar dissolves and mixture is steaming. (Do not boil.)
2. In a large bowl, whisk together egg yolks, cornstarch, salt, and remaining ¼ cup (50 grams) sugar. Gradually add warm milk mixture, whisking constantly. Pour egg yolk mixture into pan; cook over medium heat, whisking constantly, until thickened and bubbly, 4 to 5 minutes.
3. Strain mixture through a fine-mesh sieve into a medium heatproof bowl.

Whisk in 2 tablespoons (28 grams) butter and vanilla bean paste or extract until butter is melted and mixture is smooth and well combined. Cover with plastic wrap, pressing wrap directly onto surface of pastry cream to prevent a skin from forming. Refrigerate until an instant-read thermometer registers 65°F (18°C) to 70°F (21°C), 2½ to 3 hours.

4. Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C). Line 2 rimmed baking sheets with parchment paper. Reserve 2 more baking sheets and 2 more sheets of parchment paper.

5. On a lightly floured surface, roll Rough Puff Pastry Dough into a 25x13-inch rectangle (about ⅛ inch thick). Using a pastry wheel, trim ½ inch off all sides of rectangle. Cut dough into 36 (4x2-inch) rectangles; place rectangles at least 1 inch apart on prepared pans. Place a sheet of parchment paper on top of dough rectangles; top parchment with another baking sheet.

6. Bake for 15 minutes. Carefully remove top pans and parchment, and bake until deep golden brown, 3 to 5 minutes more. Let cool completely on pans on wire racks.

7. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat remaining ½ cup (113 grams) butter at medium speed until smooth, about 1 minute, stopping to scrape bottom and sides of bowl.

8. Whisk cold pastry cream until smooth. With mixer on medium speed, gradually add pastry cream to butter, beating until combined after each addition and stopping

to scrape bottom and sides of bowl and paddle.

9. Transfer filling to a pastry bag fitted with a ¼-inch round piping tip (Ateco #802). Place 12 pieces of pastry on a baking sheet, and pipe 2 rows of large dots of filling on top of each pastry. Top each with another piece of pastry. Pipe 2 rows of dots of filling on top of each pastry. Spread a thin layer of filling on top of remaining pastry pieces; place on top of layered pastries.

10. For topping: In a large bowl, whisk together cold cream, sugar, and vanilla bean paste or extract until stiff peaks form. Transfer to a pastry bag fitted with a small petal piping tip (Ateco #102.)

11. Place 2 rows of blueberries on left side of each pastry and 1 row of strawberries on right side. Pipe whipped cream mixture between blueberries and strawberries. Refrigerate until ready to serve. Best served same day as assembled. 🍰



origin of a classic

Melomakarona



The story of an ancient cookie

BY CHRISTINA FLEISCH

PHOTOGRAPHY BY KYLE CARPENTER | RECIPE DEVELOPMENT BY OLA AGBODZA
FOOD STYLING BY KATIE MOON DICKERSON | STYLING BY MAGGIE HILL

To understand the history of the delicious honey cookie known as *melomakarona*, we must go back to ancient Greece. The pantheon of Greek gods is expansive, with a god or goddess devoted to entire realms, such as Hades ruling over the underworld and Poseidon over the sea, or ruling over smaller domains like Hypnos, the god of sleep. The story of *melomakarona* starts with Makaria, the goddess of blessed death. Her name doesn't appear very often in Greek mythology, though at times, she is also described as the goddess of the Elysian Fields, the area of the afterlife where the souls of heroes and the virtuous go to rest. The belief in Makaria promised peace and serenity after death.

During ancient Greek funerals, after the burial, there was a tradition of having a *makaria*, or mercy meal as it is called today. This meal was named after the goddess and done to mourn and celebrate the lost life of a loved one. The *makaria* was sometimes called *makaronea*, which brings us to the *melomakarona*. The cookies were often served as part of the meal and were also called *makaria*. It has been speculated that after the famous funeral oration that Pericles, an Athenian politician and general during the golden age of ancient Greece, delivered in Kerameikos to honor the fallen of the Peloponnesian War, *makaria* were served to the mourners. Like many foods and their traditions, it evolved over the years and became the cookie it's known as today.

Sometime during the Byzantine Empire, which occurred between AD 300 to 1400, the cookies were soaked in honey, *meli* in Latin, thus becoming *melomakarona*. Today, *melomakarona* are enjoyed year-round, though some families tend to have them more during the Christmas holiday season. Our editorial director, Nancy Meeks, grew up eating them every fall during the annual Greek Festival in Birmingham, Alabama, and sang their praises to the rest of the *Bake from Scratch* team. The traditional shaping of *melomakarona*, done by hand, is a slightly domed oval, like an egg cut in half lengthwise, though the dough is easy to work with and can accommodate most any shape.

While our Olympics-inspired feature highlights French pastries in honor of Paris, the 2024 games' host city, *melomakarona* is a nod to the history and origins of the summer games. The first Olympic Games can be traced back to 776 BC, though scholars believe the games started long before then. The ancient games, like the modern version, were on a four-year cycle called an Olympiad. The games were part of a festival honoring Zeus, taking place in Olympia and named after the city. Any freeborn Greek male could compete, from peasants to royalty, though most athletes were soldiers. Grecians from all over would gather for the games, which lasted five days, with the festival for Zeus occurring on the third day.



Many of the trade routes that allowed countries, empires, and even continents to trade food and goods hadn't yet been established when the ancient Olympics were taking place. Grecians ate what was available to them in their region of the world. Most often, people would have either a vegetarian or pescatarian diet, consisting mostly of figs, nuts, olives, grapes, cheeses, flatbreads, and other meals made of cereals like barley and rye. Honey was often used as a sweetener in drinks, drizzled onto cakes and breads, and added into doughs.

Much like athletes today, ancient Greek athletes and their trainers knew their diet would be vastly important to their performance at the Olympics. There is evidence that in 600 BC, a specific diet, or *anankophagia*, was required of athletes. Also like today's athletes, once the competition concluded and celebrations could begin, wine would flow and many sweet

treats made with honey were available for indulging. Though we can't confirm that the ancient Olympians specifically ate melomakarona, we know they feasted on breads, cakes, and other foods that were either made with or served with many ingredients in modern melomakarona.

The Olympics occurred every four years for nearly 12 centuries before ending during the reign of Emperor Theodosius I, who was Christian and deemed the games too pagan to continue. Today's Olympics began when a Frenchman, Baron Pierre de Coubertin, was inspired to revive the athletic tradition; the first modern Olympic Games occurred in April 1896 in Athens, Greece, as a nod to their origin, with 13 nations and 280 athletes participating. Today, 206 nations and more 10,000 athletes compete in the games.

MELOMAKARONA

Makes about 24 cookies

Soft, chewy, a little cake-like, and swathed in citrus-infused honey, these cookies are the embodiment of time-honored traditions and ancient flavors. Although melomakarona are traditionally shaped by hand, we've sped up the process a little by rolling out the dough and using a cutter.

Dough:

- 2 cups (250 grams) cake flour*
- ½ cup (80 grams) semolina flour
- 1 tablespoon (3 grams) orange zest
- 1 teaspoon (5 grams) baking powder
- ¾ teaspoon (2.25 grams) kosher salt
- ½ teaspoon (2.5 grams) baking soda
- ½ teaspoon (1 gram) ground cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- ⅛ teaspoon ground cloves
- ¼ cup (50 grams) granulated sugar
- ¼ cup (56 grams) extra-virgin olive oil
- ¼ cup (56 grams) neutral oil
- ¼ cup (60 grams) fresh orange juice
- 2 tablespoons (30 grams) cognac
- 1 tablespoon (21 grams) honey
- 2 teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla extract

Syrup:

- 1½ cups (300 grams) granulated sugar
- ⅔ cup (160 grams) water
- 2 teaspoons (2 grams) orange zest
- ¼ cup (60 grams) fresh orange juice
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 2 whole cloves
- ¼ cup (85 grams) honey

Topping:

- ¼ cup (28 grams) finely chopped toasted walnuts
- ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ⅛ teaspoon kosher salt

1. For dough: In a medium bowl, whisk together flours, orange zest, baking powder, salt, baking soda, cinnamon, nutmeg, and cloves.
2. In a large bowl, whisk together sugar, oils, orange juice, cognac, honey, and vanilla. Stir in flour mixture just until a soft dough forms. Cover with plastic wrap, and refrigerate for 1 hour.
3. For syrup: In a small heavy-bottomed saucepan, bring sugar, ⅔ cup (160 grams) water, orange zest and juice, cinnamon stick, and cloves to a boil over medium heat, stirring occasionally until sugar dissolves. Remove from heat, and stir in honey. Pour into heatproof shallow dish, and let cool completely.
4. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line baking sheets with parchment paper. Place a wire rack on a sheet of parchment paper.
5. On a clean surface, roll dough into a ½-inch-thick circle. Using a 1¾-inch round cutter, cut dough, rerolling scraps. Gently shape circles into ovals. Place 1 inch apart on prepared pans. Using a fork, gently prick top of dough once or twice.
6. Bake until bottom edges begin to brown, about 20 minutes. Working in batches of about 6 cookies, using a slotted spatula, immediately remove hot cookies from pans, and place in cooled syrup, gently turning cookies to coat both sides. Place cookies on prepared rack.
7. For topping: In a small bowl, whisk together walnuts, cinnamon, and salt; sprinkle on top of cookies. Let cool completely. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

**We used King Arthur Unbleached Cake Flour.*

As the Olympic Torch Relay reaches Paris, France, and the Olympic Cauldron is ignited to mark the beginning of this year's summer games, we invite you to mark the occasion with these warm, spicy cookies that evoke both ancient traditions and modern celebrations. 🍪



gold standard



PHOTOGRAPHY BY
KYLE CARPENTER
RECIPE DEVELOPMENT BY OLA AGBODZA
FOOD STYLING BY KATIE MOON DICKERSON
STYLING BY MAGGIE HILL

Rising TO THE Occasion

*There are times when nothing but
a tall, golden cake swooped with
luscious chocolate frosting will do*

YELLOW LAYER CAKE WITH CHOCOLATE FROSTING

Makes 1 (8-inch) cake

Our yellow cake is rich, buttery, and moist thanks to the use of butter and oil, and tender and light due to cake flour. It's sturdy enough to layer confidently but maintains its fluffy, airy crumb. The only thing that makes this cake better is a generous layer of indulgently decadent chocolate buttercream frosting. As the frosting stands, it forms a lightly flaky, crispy crust that reveals a creamy, fudgy mouthful underneath, an ideal combination of textures.

- 1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- ¼ cup (56 grams) neutral oil
- 2 cups (400 grams) granulated sugar
- 2 large eggs (100 grams), room temperature
- 6 large egg yolks (112 grams)
- 1 tablespoon (13 grams) vanilla extract
- 3 cups (375 grams) cake flour
- 2½ teaspoons (12.5 grams) baking powder
- 1½ teaspoons (4.5 grams) kosher salt
- 1¼ cups (300 grams) whole buttermilk
- Chocolate Frosting (recipe follows)

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter, oil, and sugar at medium speed until fluffy, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add eggs and egg yolks, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in vanilla.
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, and salt. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture alternately with buttermilk, beginning and ending with flour mixture, beating just until combined after each addition.
4. Spray 2 tall-sided 8-inch round cake pans with baking spray with flour. Divide batter between prepared pans (about 775 grams each), smoothing tops.
5. Bake until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, 30 to 40 minutes. Let cool in pans for 5 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks.
6. Level cooled cake layers, if desired. Place 1 cake layer on a serving plate, and spread 2 cups (380 grams) Chocolate Frosting on top. Place remaining cake layer on top, and spread remaining frosting on top and sides of cake as desired. Cover and refrigerate for up to 3 days.

CHOCOLATE FROSTING

Makes 8 cups

- 2½ cups (567 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- 1 teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt
- 6¼ cups (750 grams) confectioners' sugar
- 1¼ cups (106 grams) Dutch process cocoa power
- 6 tablespoons plus 1 teaspoon (95 grams) heavy whipping cream, room temperature
- ¾ teaspoon (3 grams) vanilla extract

Our yellow cake gets its stunning golden hue from farm-raised eggs with deep-yellow yolks and European-style butter with its high butterfat content.

The combination of these ingredients results in a cake with a beautiful yellow color that is as eye-catching as the cake is irresistibly delicious.



1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and salt at low speed until smooth.
2. In a large bowl, sift together confectioners' sugar and cocoa. Gradually add sugar mixture, about 1 cup at a time, to butter mixture alternately with cream, about 1 tablespoon (15 grams) at a time, beating until smooth after each addition, stopping to scrape bottom and sides of bowl and paddle. Beat in vanilla. Increase mixer speed to medium, and beat until fluffy, 2 to 3 minutes. ¹⁰¹

*pro tips

Cake layers and frosting can be made ahead. Tightly wrap cooled cake layers in plastic wrap and refrigerate for up to 3 days or freeze for up to 3 months. Frosting can be refrigerated in an airtight container for up to 3 days. Let cake layers thaw in the refrigerator, and let frosting come to room temperature and re-whip before using.

This recipe makes two tall cake layers and a very generous amount of frosting that, when combined, create a dramatic presentation. Feel free to halve the layers horizontally for 4 thinner layers or decrease the amount of frosting to suit your preference.

To get frosting swoopy and smooth without air bubbles, vigorously stir it with a silicone spatula for 10 to 15 seconds to knock out extra air before using.

fast-fix baking

YOUR NEW ALMOND JOY



BY JENNIFER PENTON
WITH ANDA STABILI
AND JON DICKERSON
AND ERIK HILL

ALMOND FRANGIPANE COOKIES

Makes about 18 large cookies

We make no secret of our love of frangipane, a creamy spread of ground almonds, butter, and eggs that can be baked into cakes, pies, and practically anything else you can think of. Frangipane is one of the most common and popular fillings for croissants, so we took inspiration from that epic combo to create this cookie with the same flavors but in a fraction of the time and a lot less effort. A sprinkle of sliced almonds on top provides just enough crunchy contrast to the soft and chewy cookie base.

- 2¼ cups (281 grams) all-purpose flour
- 1 cup (96 grams) blanched almond flour
- ¾ teaspoon (3.75 grams) baking powder
- ½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt
- ¼ teaspoon (1.25 grams) baking soda
- 1¼ cups (275 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar*

- 1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, melted and cooled slightly
- ¾ cup (150 grams) granulated sugar
- 2 large eggs (100 grams)
- 2 teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) almond extract
- 1½ cups (170 grams) sliced almonds
- Garnish:** confectioners' sugar

1. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk together flours, baking powder, salt, and baking soda.
3. In another medium bowl, whisk together brown sugar, melted butter, and granulated sugar until well combined. Whisk in eggs and extracts until smooth. Stir in flour mixture until just combined and no dry streaks remain. (Dough will seem soft.)
4. In a small bowl, place almonds.
5. Using a 3-tablespoon spring-loaded scoop, scoop dough (about 60 grams each) directly into almonds. Roll dough

in almonds, gently pressing to adhere, making sure to pack almonds on as much as possible. Place on prepared pan. Refrigerate until firm, 45 minutes to 1 hour.

6. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line baking sheets with parchment paper.

7. Place dough balls 2 inches apart on prepared pans.

8. Bake, one pan at a time, until edges are set and golden brown, 17 to 20 minutes. Let cool on pans for 10 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on a wire rack. Garnish with confectioners' sugar, if desired. Store in an airtight container for up to 4 days. 🍪

*We used C&H® Light Brown Sugar.



bake it like brian

cover recipe

PHOTOGRAPHY BY KYLE CARPENTER
FOOD STYLING BY KATIE MOON DICKERSON
STYLING BY MAGGIE HILL

Single-Serve Sensations

Inspired by a recipe in my friend Julie Tanous's cookbook, Food Between Friends, I combined my love for strawberry pretzel salad and creamy semifreddo to create a heavenly summertime treat. I punctuated our lush Vanilla Semifreddo with a sweet-tart strawberry spread, creating a beautiful swirl effect atop a salty pecan-pretzel crumb crust. For the perfect presentation, I used my copper molds to shape the dessert and devised a simple method for effortlessly removing the individual servings from their molds. Just a heads-up, this dessert requires a minimum of six hours in the freezer, so plan accordingly.



STRAWBERRY-PECAN MINI SEMIFREDDOS

Makes 6 servings

- 1¼ cups (57 grams) mini salted pretzels
- ½ cup (57 grams) pecan halves*
- 3 tablespoons (36 grams) granulated sugar
- 3 tablespoons (42 grams) unsalted butter, melted
- Vanilla Semifreddo (recipe on page 45)
- 1 cup (320 grams) strawberry spread*, divided

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).
2. Line 6 (1-cup) copper molds or 8-ounce ramekins with 2 (8- to 10-inch-long) 1-inch-wide strips of foil to make an “X,” letting excess extend over sides of molds (A). Line bottom of each mold with parchment paper (B).
3. In the work bowl of a food processor, pulse pretzels and pecans until finely chopped and well combined. In a medium bowl, stir together pretzel mixture, sugar, and melted butter until well combined and mixture holds together when lightly pressed. Divide mixture among prepared molds (about 2 tablespoons or 28 grams each). Press firmly into an even layer (C). Place molds on a rimmed baking sheet.
4. Bake until fragrant and set, about 15 minutes. Transfer molds to a wire rack, and let cool completely.
5. Prepare Vanilla Semifreddo mixture from step 2 through the first sentence of step 4. Add ½ cup (160 grams) strawberry spread to Vanilla Semifreddo, and stir once or twice to just barely mix in. Spoon semifreddo mixture into prepared molds, scooping from where strawberry spread has swirled to preserve large streaks of fruit. Alternately spoon remaining strawberry spread and remaining semifreddo mixture into molds. Smooth tops with an offset spatula. Place molds on a baking sheet, and freeze until firm, at least 6 hours, or up to overnight.
6. Let molds stand at room temperature for 5 minutes or gently warm sides and bottoms of molds with your hands, a warm towel, or a handheld kitchen torch. Using excess foil pieces as handles, gently lift each semifreddo straight up and out of mold. (If semifreddo is sticking, let stand for 5 minutes or warm the side with your hands and try again.) Using an offset spatula, smooth sides, if desired. Serve immediately, or freeze in an airtight container for up to 1 week. ❧

*I used Schermer Pecans and Bonne Maman® Strawberry Fruit Spread.

WINDOWPANE TEST

Kneading dough to develop the gluten structure is an essential part of the majority of yeasted dough recipes. But how do you know when you've kneaded enough? Enter the windowpane test: Pinch or cut—but don't tear, because this damages the gluten strands—a small, walnut-size piece of dough. Then gently and slowly pull and rotate the dough out from its center. If the dough is properly kneaded, you will be able to stretch it—without tearing—until it's thin and translucent. If it tears or breaks during the stretch, give your dough another minute of work and then test again. If the dough is too hard to stretch, it's been overmixed.



FINGER DENT TEST

After your dough has rested the amount of time according to your recipe, lightly flour your fingertip or knuckle, and gently press about ½ inch into the surface. If your dough has properly proofed, you should be able to watch the dough spring back slightly but still show an indentation. Additionally, the dough has roughly doubled in size from its original amount. In underproofed dough, your finger dent will immediately spring back; the gluten is strong, but the carbon dioxide bubbles haven't expanded enough to allow the dough to rise to its full potential. In overproofed dough, the finger dent never fills back in; the carbon dioxide bubbles have stretched the gluten past its limits.



HIGH-RISE MUFFINS

Leaving every other cup of the muffin pan empty allows for maximum rise and doming to your muffins; adding water to the empty cups helps the pan heat evenly and prevents warping.



FOCACCIA FOLDING



The traditional method of kneading is replaced with a simple folding technique in focaccia dough. Reach under one side of dough, and gently stretch the edge of the dough as high as you can without tearing. Once you reach the top, fold the dough over the center. This motion strengthens the gluten network and is the preferred method to build elasticity for doughs that have high hydration levels. Repeat three more times around bowl to complete one round of folding. Fold the dough in the bowl every 30 minutes for a total of 1½ hours. By the last fold, you should notice the dough has become smooth and elastic.

TOASTING NUTS

To toast nuts, heat them in a small dry skillet over medium heat, stirring or shaking skillet occasionally, until lightly browned and fragrant. Let them cool completely before using.

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